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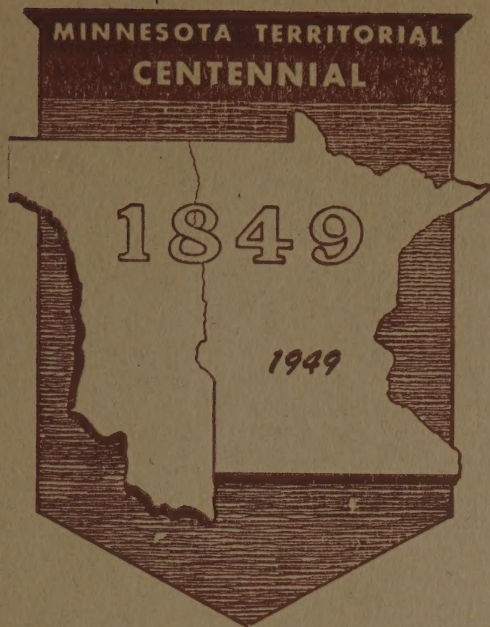


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HISTORICAL FACTS  
OF  
SIBLEY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

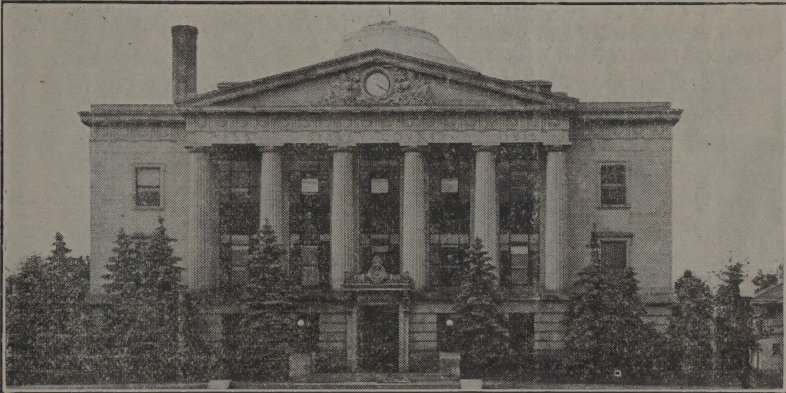
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
OF  
SIBLEY COUNTY, MINN.

Sibley County  
Centennial Committee  
from Organization in 1853 to 1949





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Sibley County Court House

Sibley Hill \$ 7.50 4-30-66 R.O. 2218

# Foreword

This story of Sibley County is the result of the diligent work of citizens of each township, city and village of the county. These committee men had many obstacles to overcome because of the loss of records by fire and otherwise.

Sibley county contains fifteen complete and two fractional townships, named in the order of their organization: Henderson, Kelso, Arlington, Jesseland, Faxon, Washington Lake, Green Isle, New Auburn, Dryden, Sibley, Transit, Alfsborg, Severance, Cornish, Grafton, Bismarck and Moltke.

Compiled by W. C. Schueler, Walter Murphy and Joseph Brennan


**MAKERS OF MINNESOTA**

Sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society


Henry H. Sibley

ONE OF MINNESOTA'S MOST PROMINENT FIGURES FROM 1834-1891. A FUR TRADER, TERRITORIAL DELEGATE, MEMBER OF THE TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE, AND FIRST GOVERNOR OF THE STATE.

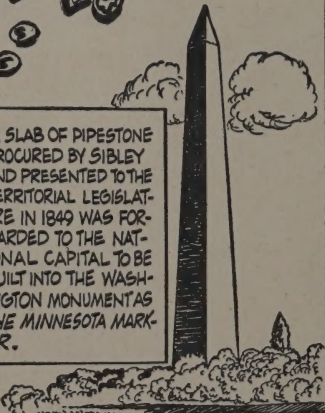
IN 1862 SIBLEY WAS COMMISSIONED BY GOV. RAMSEY AS GENERAL AND COMMANDER OF THE FORCES WHICH SUPPRESSED THE SIOUX OUTBREAK. THE FOLLOWING YEAR HE LED A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SIOUX IN THE DAKOTAS.



IN 1836 SIBLEY BUILT IN MENDOTA THE FIRST STONE HOUSE IN MINNESOTA. ALL HIS CHILDREN WERE BORN IN THIS HOUSE. THE POLITICAL BOUNDARIES DURING 1834-62 WERE CHANGED SO OFTEN, THAT EACH CHILD THOUGH BORN IN THE SAME ROOM, WAS BORN IN A DIFFERENT POLITICAL UNIT. THE OLDEST IN MICHIGAN, THE SECOND IN WISCONSIN, THE THIRD IN IOWA, THE FOURTH IN DAKOTA, THE FIFTH IN MINN. TERRITORY, THE YOUNGEST IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.



A SLAB OF PIPESTONE PROCURED BY SIBLEY AND PRESENTED TO THE TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE IN 1849 WAS FORWARDED TO THE NATIONAL CAPITAL TO BE BUILT INTO THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT AS THE MINNESOTA MARKER.



© R. Pederson

1849 Minnesota Territorial Centennial 1949

Sibley county derived its name from General Henry Hastings Sibley, pioneer, fur trader, military leader and Governor of Minnesota. The county

was established by act of the Legislature, March 5, 1853. The boundaries were then deprived as follows: Beginning at the northwest corner of Hennepin county, thence up the north fork of the Crow River to its second fork, thence along the line of said county to the place of beginning. These boundaries were changed several times. The county was reduced in to its present limits, bounded by Renville, McLeod and Carver counties on the north; Nicollet county on the south, Carver, Scott, and Le Sueur counties on the east.

It is impossible to give a detailed and reliable history of the beginnings of Sibley county, because the records were destroyed by fire October 18, 1863. What data is available for that period is the result of conversations with several of the early settlers. If errors exist, as they undoubtedly do, we must take into consideration the difficulty of giving, from memory alone, a correct account of these years.

The organization of this county was effected March 5, 1853. The meeting was held in the upper floor of the old Valley House in Henderson. The county officers elected, as far as can be ascertained were: Joseph R. Brown, Register of Deeds; John Clark, Sheriff; C. H. Drew, Surveyor; Nicolas Hilger, Auditor; Henry Poehler, Treasurer; John H. Miller, Judge of Probate; John Miller, A. Walker, Conrad Herrman, County Commissioners.

The first court was held in the spring of 1855, by Judge A. C. Chatfield in the Valley House, C. H. Drew acting as clerk. The county offices moved about the town of Henderson many times during those first years of organization. In 1856 Joseph R. Brown erected several small offices for the use of the various officials. Then in 1858 Henry Poehler erected a two story frame building at the corner of Main and 3rd streets, the county using the second story. The offices were moved to the Welch Building in 1862, where they burned out October 18, 1863. After the fire several more moves were made. A room rented from Jacob Frankenfield for 6 months at \$12 per month. In 1866 to a house in Block 50 for one year. Then to one in Block 58 owned by August Blasing, in 1870 to a building owned by William Carroll.

At a meeting of commissioners January 2, 1867 a resolution was passed issuing the legislature to pass an act enabling the county to issue bonds to the amount of \$200.00 for county buildings. Permission was granted at the next session of the legislature, March 11, 1870. The matter was submitted to popular vote and was carried. A tract of land, about four acres, purchased at corner of Main and Sixth streets. A two story brick jail and sheriff residence was completed in September, 1871. On March 29, 1879, arrangements were made for the erection of the present county building (now Community Building of the City of Henderson).

The court house was erected that year. It was of brick, two and one-stories and basement. The old county offices taken out and made into a large, commodious hall. The present county buildings at Gaylord were erected after the removal of the county seat to that village in 1915.

(Brown suggested the name of Sibley in honor of his friend, Henry Hastings Sibley. It is worthy of note that when Major Brown was buried at Henderson in 1870, General Sibley delivered an eulogy at his grave).

## ***Henderson Township***

Henderson Township was named in honor and in the memory of the mother of Joseph R. Brown.

The first settlers to make permanent homes were Jacob Witzany 1854, Henry Thies 1855, and Joe Barle 1858.

Organized 1853. The oldest township in Sibley County. Early record of township election not available.

The first marriage was that of Nicholas Hilger to Susan Marsh in the spring of 1856.

The first birth was that of a daughter Clara to John and Sara Clark in the fall of 1853.

The first death was that of a Bohemian stranger early in 1856.

School was first held in a log house in 1854-1855 by J. J. Peck, teacher. School organized were: School District No. 1 in 1854; School District No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, and No. 5, all prior to 1860. All are open and operating.

The first church activity was carried on by a Congregational missionary in 1854. The Methodists held services in 1857 in log houses. A Lutheran church used to be located in Section 9.



Old Log House built in 1850's still serves as a home in Henderson Twp.  
Built by Mr. Mohrnweiser and Friends

At present Henderson Township has a population of 647 with 147 farm families.

Henderson Township is hilly and timbered along the east or the river side. Farms were grubbed out of the timber land. The western part is a prairie and is the good farming country.

Early settlers: Joseph Barle, Stephen Bock, August Dee, Julius Furch, John Kirch, Wm. Krueger, August Mohren Weiser, Henry Thies, Mathias Theissen, John Theissen, Fred Wegge, Ferdinand Wigand, Henry Wigand, John Wigand, Theodore Wigand, Nicolas Welter, Joseph Witzany.

Among known descendants of pioneers now living in Henderson Township (1949) are: Clarence Buck, Hattie Winter, August Witzany, William Witzany, Winnifred Witzany, Mrs. Erick Fitzke, Louis Koblinger, Helen Theissen.

Information furnished by Franklin Kroehler, Mrs. Aug. Witzany and Henry Schrank.

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## ***Kelso Township***

The name Kelso was given to the township by A. P. Walker who surveyed the area in 1854. The name is of Scotch derivation, being the name of a town on the Tweed River in southern Scotland.

In 1855 the first permanent settlers arrived, namely Cyrus Colby, Morgan Lacy and Oliver, Moses and Cyrus Peltier. In 1856, John and Patrick Geib,

Conrad Buesing, Alma Mesker and James Amoit settled in Kelso. Arnold Delger, Freeman Colby and Charles Hennessey followed in 1857. Dr. Edward Neill in his History of the Minnesota Valley (1882) relates:—"While the first township organization was probably effected in 1858, there are no records or data to afford positive proof, nor from which to obtain the names of subsequent officers for several years, and the memory of the 'oldest settlers' is so diversified that no attempt at giving the first officers is made."

The first marriage was that of Robert Wade and Dorothy Bingham in 1860. The marriage was performed by justice of peace Freeman Colby. It took place in the residence of a Mr. Kilmer. The father of Jonathan Mills in 1857 is the first known death in the Township.

A school was organized in winter of 1857. Classes were conducted in the residence of Mr. Clark in the southeastern part of the township by a Mr. Putman. In 1858, Districts No. 6 and 7 were started. At present (1949) Districts No. 6, No. 7, and No. 58 are in operation.

The Evangelical Association was incorporated at Rush River in 1882. The first trustees were August Kuske, John Kuske and William Kuske. W. Oehler was the pastor. (No churches in Township at present.)

Kelso Township lies directly west of Henderson, Minnesota. Rush River and its two branches afford an abundance of water. The soil is deep and slightly sandy and the surface has just enough variation to drain to good advantage. Kelso attracted the attention of the pioneers and was one of the first of Sibley County townships to be settled. On account of its wooded area it was somewhat slower in organizing than other townships.

A postoffice was established near the western part of the town and called Kelso. The postmaster was B. Schnackenberg (1882). A few years later another postoffice was established at Rush River in the eastern part.



Dreves-Kracht Estate, Kelso Township

New Rome was established on the northern boundary adjoining Arlington Township in July 1, 1876. John Groetsch was appointed postmaster.

A townsite called Fremont was surveyed and platted in 1857 upon land owned by a Mr. Yole, but was never developed further. It remained farm land. In 1871 St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church purchased a parcel of ground for a cemetery. This land was purchased from Conrad Buesing Sr. in Section 3, Township 112, Kelso.

Early Pioneer Settlers were: H. Becker, Gustaff Bretch, H. Budke, G. Cormier, Arnold Delger, C. A. B. Delger, Conrad Delger, Fred Drever- Kracht, Charles Flantz, F. Fuerstnow, Jacob Geib, John Geib, Valentine Geib, John Groetsch, Charles Hoecke, Casper Holzgrove, Will Kusche, Carl S. Lund, A. Obernolte, John A. Pfarr, Fred Pioske, Herman Prahl, Henry Prior, Luke Riley, B. Schnackenberg, A. R. Steinke, Diedrich Thoele, Hermann Thoele, F. Wendel-

schaefer, F. Werges, Andrew Wiest, Fredrick Wiest, Charles Woehler, Ernest Yonker.

Present population is 569 with 157 farm families (1949).

Information furnished by John Boettcher.

## ***Arlington Township***

Settlement began in 1855. In the fall of that year came Lathrop Farlin, W. D. Torry, and Diedrich Thoele, Amasa Townsend, Mr. Toll, Mr. Brewster, also Patrick Sullivan. The village of Arlington was laid out in Section 9 in 1856. The first postoffice in 1857, J. S. Perry, postmaster. First town meeting at the house of G. Dolz in Section 9, on May 11, 1858. W. D. Torry was chairman; D. A. Martin was moderator; J. S. Perry, clerk. The name of Arlington received its name from a Mr. Hurd, who came from Arlington, Vermont, and claimed site at that time. First teacher in Arlington school was Wm. Beatty, 1857-1858, in a log building.

Arlington Township was organized May 11, 1858. Thomas Vaughn, chairman; Henry Roehler, and George Wheaton, supervisors; G. L. Teeple, clerk; W. S. Beatty, assessor; Julius Rittr, collector; W. D. Torry and Conrad GALLEY 5—

Rehling, justices; A. H. Townsend, overseer of poor; Elondus Hood and Ludwig Lieske, constables. Overseers: District 1, A. H. Townsend; District 2; Thomas Vaughn, District 3; Thomas Thompson; District 4, Francis Peltz.

### **Homesteaders**

Ludwig Schulenberg, Sec. 1, 1860	W. D. Torry, Sec. 4, 1860
Carl Doering, Sec. 2, 1863	Wm. Slough, Sec. 8, 1860
Chris Klinkert, Sec. 9, 1857	Henry Beseke, Sec. 10, 1860
Thomas Vaughn, Sec. 9, 1859	John Beatty, Sec. 17, 1860
David Schauer, Sec. 11, 1860	Henry Roehler, Sec. 16, 1856
Homer L. Collins, Sec. 18, 1858	John Narr, Sec. 14, 1861
Frederick Luehring, Sec. 15, 1860	Henry Bade, Sec. 19, 1859
Ludwig Lieske, Sec. 13, 1857	Paul Anglehoffer, Sec. 21
Robert Beatty, Sec. 20, 1857	H. Duehlmeyer, Sec. 26, 1860
Henry Weihe, Sec. 22, 1860	Christian Rischmiller, Sec. 23, 1860
Jonas Doerr, Sec. 23, 1860	Frederick Thies, Sec. 30, 1863
Francis Peltz, Sec. 24, 1860	Geo. C. Reichenbach, Sec. 28, 1857
Charlotta Weihe, Sec. 29, 1858	Conrad Rerling, Sec. 27, 1857
J. C. Fischer, Sec. 27, 1857	George Asel, Sec. 26, 1857
Aug. Rischmiller, Sec. 26, 1858	Henry Wolters, Sec. 32, 1858
John Pomplun, Sec. 31, 1857	Fred. Greenhagen, Sec. 33, 1859
John P. Behning, Sec. 33, 1860	Wm. Breitreutz, Sec. 35, 1858
August Lieske, Sec. 34, 1858	Wendel Kistner, Sec. 15
Tom Welsch, Sec. 36, 1857	Christian Obermolte, Sec. 34, 1862
Herman Schulenberg, Sec. 2, 1860	

### **First Pioneers**

Henry Bade came to America in 1859. Settled in Section 19. Born in Germany. Joe Barry came from Ireland, landed in Boston in 1856. In 1856 settled in Section 2, Arlington Township. Married to Hannah McSweeney in 1856 and their children are Collins, Honora, Mary J., David, John, Margaret, Joe. Martin Kube came here in 1857 and settled in Section 25. Henry Bening, born in 1846, came here in 1857, settled in Section 33, married to Amelia Reimer in 1872. The children are Rose, Henry, Emma, Walter, Fred, Martha, John, Clara, Manda. Henry Blume, born in 1822, came here in 1854, stayed in Chicago 4 years. Settled in Section 32 in 1858 (at present time Walter Mass place).

Jonas Doerr, born in 1823, left Germany in 1854, came here in 1856.

Michel Engel, born in 1826, came here in 1854, settled in Wisconsin, came to Section 33 in 1857. During the Indian outbreak in 1862, Mr. Engel happened to have a wagon with a wooden axle which would run dry very easily, so his companions insisted that he keep this greased so the Indians would not hear him. They moved out during the night.

Diedrich Thoele came in 1855 and homesteaded in Section 36 in the Southwest quarter. His son Diedrich homesteaded in northwest quarter, but being under age they forced him to give it up. Mr. Thoele bought a bushel of wheat for \$5.00 when they left Ohio. There were several families in the group. They were coming to Arlington Township with some horses and oxen. They seeded this bushel of wheat the next spring—they sold a little of that for 25c a buhsel, took it to Le Sueur where it was shipped out by boat.

John Narr, born in 1831, came here in 1854, settled in Section 13. Married Christina Kloppenbach in 1860. Children were Matilda, Edward, John, Emma, Albert, Herman, Christ, August, Margaret, Charles.

John Andreas Meyer, born in 1809, came here in 1854. Married Henrietta Narr. Children are Margaret (later married Fred Mueller of Arlington), Christina, now Mrs. Wendlandt, still living and is 90 years old, Andrew, Louisa, Karl.

John G. Mueller, settled in Section 31 in 1860. Married to Dorothea Greenhagen in 1865.

Philip Nagel, born in 1822. Settled in Section 27, now Paul Nagel farm.

Conrad Rehling, born in 1813. Settled in Section 27 in 1856.

Christian Rischmiller, born in 1816. Settled in Section 23 in 1854.

Ferdinand Soeffker, born in 1827. Settled in Section 28 in 1856.

Fred Sander settled in Section 36 in 1863. (Art Sander is now on this land.

Dan McSweeney, born in 1813. Settled in Section 2 in 1855. Married to Abbie O'Neil in 1853. Children are Thomas, Eugene, John, Dan, Abbie, Kate (the late Mrs. Mike O'Brian), Mary.

First Born. Margaret Meyer, born in 1856, daughter of John Andreas Meyer. First Death. Alfred Slough, died in June 1858. First marriage in



Log House Built in 1857 on Wilmensen Farm in Arlington Township

Arlington Township was Samuel Boelter and Louisa Gabbert (from Henderson vicinity) on July 4, 1861. They were married in the home of Fred Borth. Witnesses were Fred and Wilhalmena Borth. William Meyer and Uricka Wells (both of Nicollet County) married in the church by Rev. A. E. Winter, in 1861.

## Churches

St. John's Lutheran Church of Arlington Township was founded in 1856, then known as Prairie Mound. (Prairie Mound is inscribed on the present church bells). First pastor, a missionary, Rev. Ferdinand Siever, of Frankfurt, Michigan. Church was organized on July 3, 1859. Rev. J. Rupprecht was the first minister. First elders of the church: William Breitskreutz, president; Martin Blaesing, secretary; Elders: H. Greenhagen, K. Dohme, Julius Ritter (these were elders and trustees). The first building was a log building, seats of planks, pulpit was a big store box with a black cloth covering. Built about in 1860. First death in this parish was William Ellig, born Oct. 11, 1859, died Oct. 12, 1859.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran church of New Rome. First pastor was Rev. Fachmann, 1866-1874. First elders were Jonas Doerr, Samuel Senske, C. H. Meirhoff, Julius Henke, secretary. This was a log building with seats of planks. Present building erected in 1884.

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## Jessenland Township

Just north of Henderson Township is Jessenland Township said to receive its name from Jesse Cameron, its first settler.

Part of the township is cut off by the Minnesota River, its eastern border. The surface is irregular with high bluffs along the river, deep ravines and marshy land to the west. High Island creek runs through the township emptying into the Minnesota River. Silver Lake is in the northwest part. Originally, the surface was heavy timberland. This has been cut and grubbed out to make room for farm land.

Thomas Doheny came in 1852. Doheny's Landing, a river boat stop, was a rival of Henderson City for some time as a trading place. In 1854 H. J. Seigneuret settled on Section 26, followed by Edward Grimes, Nelson Norman in 1855, and Anthony Weber and Dof Marmarin in 1856.

The Township was organized May 11, 1858. Elected were Henry Young, Chairman; Wm. Rotert and Wm. Carroll, supervisors; Richard Frederick, clerk; August Miller, assessor; Anton Weber, collector; and P. Sheridan and R. Frederick, justices.

The first marriage was that of Michael D. Bray to Miss Mary Hayes on September 16, 1855. This was the county's first marriage performed in the first log school house by Father Somereisen.

M. D. Siegneuret born October 1855 was the first child born here. He grew up to become County Auditor in which office he served with distinction.

Louis Kuntz died in 1857. He was storekeeper on Silver Lake. His was the first death in Jessenland Township.

The first school was a long structure on Section 17, built in 1855. The schools in order of organization are: School Districts No. 10, 11, 12, 13, 43. Part of School District No. 42 lies in Jessenland Township as does part of School District No. 80. Because of the terrain and because pupils walked to school these districts were small. School Districts No. 12, 13, and 43 are now (1949) closed.

St. Thomas Catholic church with 100 families is Jessenland's church. This church has over 130 families now. The church cemetery is one of the county's oldest cemeteries. This church has recently been redecorated and is one of the county's most impressive.

Other early settlers: Ignatius Anderley, Martin Bach, William Berger, Thomas Brown, Thomas F. Brown, Richard Carroll, Michael Carroll, John Collins, Daniel Conolly, Patrick Conolly, Denis Doheny, John H. Doheny, Thomas Doheny, James Donovan, Luke Finnagen, Michael Flinn, John Flinn, John Flynn, William Furch, William Gabbert, Lewis H. Gadlow, S. Gondreau, Mich-

ael Graham, Edward Grimes, James Hartigan, Michael Higgins, Honora McNamara, Edmond McSweeney, Hector Morell, Nelson Norman, Joseph O'Keefe, Joseph Scully, Patrick Shaughnessy, Catherine Spellacy, Charles Tierney, Anthony Weber, Henry Young, and a Morrisette family, and a Zeiher family.

Jessenland Township has definitely a mixed populace. Some of the early French settlers are said to be descendants of the Acadians mentioned in the poem "Evangeline". Others came from Canada, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, England, and Sweden.

At present Jessenland has a population of 703. One hundred forty-nine families. A great number of the descendants of the early settlers live in Jessenland Township.

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## ***Faxon Township***

This is one of the oldest townships in the county. It is located in the northeast corner, bordering on the Minnesota River, and contains about 20 square miles. The soil is a heavy black loam. There are two lakes, Kerry Lake and Hellstrom Lake.

The first settlers were the Walker Brothers, Joseph, Cornelius, and Hartwell, and a cousin Levi Walker. About the same time, Calvin Lowry came to Faxon. The Lowrys were from Maine. They arrived in Faxon in May 1852. They claimed the site of Faxon village and adjoining land. The Township of Faxon and its former village received its name in honor of one of the townsite members of the Faxon family of Maine. Mrs. Hartwell Walker came to Faxon in 1853. She was the first white woman in the township. She died in 1858.

Michael Nally, born in May 1854, son of Thomas Nally was the first white child born in Faxon Township. The first death recorded is that of the four year old daughter of Hartwell Walker. She was buried in Faxon village.

ael Graham, Edward Grimes, James Hartigan, Michael Higgins, Honora McNeill. The first marriage was that of Daniel O. Flynn and Jane O'Neill.

The place where the village of Faxon was platted was for a number of years known as Walker's Landing. A postoffice was established in 1856. It was called "Big Hill". Letters were addressed—"Big Hill, Walker's Landing". Hartwell Walker was postmaster. He held the position but a short time then Robert Phillips was appointed. The name was subsequently changed to Faxon. In 1882 Daniel O. Flynn became postmaster. He deputized Mrs. M. M. Sass. She maintained the postoffice at her home on the site of Faxon village.

A townsite company was formed in 1857. The Walkers were given certain privileges in regard to their landing on the river. The town was surveyed in April of that year. It was located partly in Section 4 and partly in Section 5. It covered almost 600 acres. Mr. Faxon was a member of the company. The first store was established by the Phillips Brothers, with a general stock of merchandise. Others moved in, until there were three general stores, a blacksmith shop and two saloons. A steam saw-mill was erected by the company. This mill passed to other hands and ceased operations a few years later. A warehouse was built near the landing. A ferry crossing was established at an early date. This ferry became the property of Mr. Ferris. He operated the ferry until 1862. It was then transferred to Blakeley.

The first school was taught by Mrs. Susan Thompson, during the summer of 1859. A small log building was erected for the purpose in the village. The township now has four frame school houses. Districts No. 21 and No. 22 are closed at present (1949).

In 1864 St. John's Catholic church was organized. The first church was a log structure erected in Section 23. That building was used a few years when a frame building was erected near by. The parish now (1949) has a fine brick church and rectory. The parish in 1882 had a membership of about 60 families.

Anna postoffice was established about in 1877. Mrs. Johanna Bailey was appointed postmistress. This postoffice was located in her house near St. John's church.

The first town meeting was held in the home of Hartwell Walker, May 11, 1858. The following officers were elected: P. C. Bray, chairman; M. Miller, James Boland, supervisors; Nathan Working, clerk; John Nolan, assessor, Hartwell Walker, collector; Patrick McCormick, Michael Egan, justices of the peace; Isaac Thompson, Martin Morrison, constables.

The early settlers: Patrick Bailey, James Boland, Mark Cowley, Walter E. Doheny, Felix Dolin, Michael Egan, E. Erickson, Mr. Franciscus, John Griffin, Peter Lynch, Charles McCloskey, and Daniel O. Flynn.

Population at time of organization was 50. In 1940 population was 407 with 85 farm families.

Around 45 of the early settlers' descendants are now living in Faxon Township (1949).

Information furnished by Ed. Flynn.

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## *Washington Lake Township*

This Township is located in the northeastern part of Sibley County. It was named after Washington, D. C. by the first settlers, John Shaughnessy and Michael Griffin, who staked their claims in 1854 followed by Martin Shaughnessy, Michael Shaughnessy, John Eagen, Mathew Wilson, John Cotter, Charles Duane, Daniel Healy, and Thomas Healy.

The Township was organized May 11, 1858, with John Murphy as chairman of the town board.

The first marriage was that of Patrick Eagen to Bridget Kelly in 1857.

The first birth was that of a son, Edward, to Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Carlin in December of 1856.

The first death was that of Micheal Sheily in 1857. He was buried in Jessenland Township.

Mrs. Mathew Wilson taught the first school in her home on the shore of Washington Lake. Present (1949) school districts are Districts No. 25, 26, 27, 29, and 80, the last to be organized in the early 1900's in the county.

Green Isle Parish in Section 18, now St. Brendan's Catholic church in Green Isle Village organize under Father Venn. The citizens of the Township are mostly members of the Lutheran churches in Carver and McLeod Counties or the Catholic and Lutheran churches in Green Isle Village.

One of the earliest industries was that of the saw mill of William Cain Cross in Section 19, in the year 1866. Section 18 thus became a little hamlet and a trading center.

In February 1878, Philip McGrann started a store in part of his residence. Pat McCormick, also in Section 18, put in a store in his home. The Downs Brothers rented the McCormick house and did a flourishing merchantile business.

Green Isle postoffice was established close to this area in 1866 in Section 13. Christopher Dolan was the first postmaster.

With the coming of the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad the village of Green Isle was laid out in Section 18 in August of 1881.

The village first had a Catholic parochial school and a Lutheran school. Now, the village has a fine 4-room brick building, School District No. 71. The village has a population of 376. Washington Lake Township has a population of 802.

Because of the loss of the early records, we are unable to state the population in 1858, the time of organization. Washington Lake has 150 farm families at present (1949).

Pioneer settlers were: William Cain Cross, John Cotter, Martin Cunningham, Dennis Downs, Michael Downs, Daniel Healy, Thomas Healy, John Hogan, Pat McCormick, Philip McGrann, P. McGuinnis, Thomas McMehan, Hugh Mullen, Patrick Mullen, Michael Mulligan, Michael Naven, Alfred Shau, James

Smith, John Smith, William Smith, and Mathew Wilson. These settlers were of Irish, Scotch, and English descent coming from Europe and Eastern United States.

Many of these sold out to the German settlers who came later. The Township at present (1949) is dominated by the descendants of these German immigrant families.

Washington Lake is one of the most prosperous of the country's farming townships. It has fine farming land and much fine timber land. Its citizens are energetic and thrifty and up-to-date in their farming methods.

Information furnished by Henry Santer and Francis R. Brown.

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## ***New Auburn Township***

New Auburn Township is located in the northern part of the county, bounded on the north and west by McLeod County, on the east by Green Isle Township, and on the south by Dryden Township.

The first settlers moved into New Auburn Township in the fall of 1855. The organization of the Township was delayed until May 11, 1858. The meeting was held in the Williams Hotel. The following officers were elected: J. H. Mayhall, chairman; P. M. Weaver and Wm. Arnold, supervisors; Ed. Scantleburg, clerk; N. Pedrick, assessor; J. U. Green, collector; Robert Duncan, overseer of the poor; R. Wilkinson and J. B. Scantleburg, justices; F. N. Gibbs and J. N. Arnold, constables. At this meeting 48 votes were cast.

Pioneer families: W. F. Vaughan, F. N. Gibbs, William Arnold and Fred Bielke.

Descendants of original pioneers now living in Township (1949): Mrs. Alma Fuller, descendant of W. F. Vaughan. Mrs. Cora Allen, descendant of F. N. Gibbs. Seward Gibbs, descendant of F. N. Gibbs. May Vaughan, descendant of Frank Ramsdell.

The first marriage was that of J. U. Green and Martha A. Arnold on May 13, 1858. They were married in the bride's home, located in Section 13. J. B. Scantleburg, justice of peace, witnessed the marriage.

The first birth was that of Louisa Jenks, daughter of James and Margaret Jenks. She was born November 15, 1856.

The first death in the township was that of Fred Charles in the fall of 1858. He was burned to death in the home of his brother, Ernest. His wife was badly burned saving her children.

The first school was taught by Miss Abby Ramsdell in the summer of 1858 in a log building near the south line of the town. The Township and Village of New Auburn now (1949) have seven schools and employing eight teachers.

The first church was built in 1866 by the Methodists and Baptists. Both using the same building. A Mr. Shepard had already conducted services in 1856. The religious services were conducted in private homes. There are now three churches in the Township: Zion Lutheran Church in the eastern part of the Township, started as a mission in 1882; Immanuel Lutheran Church in the Village of New Auburn was organized July 19, 1891. The Gospel Tabernacle in the Village was organized in 1941.

There are two cemeteries in New Auburn Township. The Zion Lutheran cemetery organized in connection with the church. The High Island cemetery on the west banks of High Island Lake was formed and organized April 23, 1881. Although there were burials there in 1860 and possibly earlier. There are 44 soldiers buried in this cemetery. The first soldier buried there was James McCortney, Co. B 4th Minnesota. He died December 3, 1863.

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## ***Dryden Township***

This township was at first called Williamstown, but upon the request of Hamilton Beatty and a few others, it was renamed Dryden. This name was

given in honor of the celebrated English poet and dramatist, John Dryden (born 1631, died 1700).

The first two settlers in Dryden Township were Edward Price and John Doerr. They arrived in the year 1854. In the year 1856 the following took claims in the Township: Frederick Norton, Henry Altnow, Thomas Lewis, William Williams, and Fred Nessay.

Dryden Township was organized on May 11, 1858. The first officers were: Hamilton Beatty, chairman; Joseph Camble and Isaac Traxel, supervisors; J. W. Beatty, clerk; Andrew Beatty assessor; Thomas Heath, overseer of the poor; John Dressen and Hamilton Beatty, justices of the peace; J. Lewis and J. Camble, constables.

#### Early Homesteaders:

William Hesselgrove .....	July 2, 1860	Henry Callwell .....	Oct. 2, 1861
Edward Clark .....	Oct. 9, 1859	Henry Altnow .....	June 2, 1856
Joseph Russell .....	Oct. 7, 1857	Christina Marth .....	Apr. 1, 1861
Barnard Duff .....	July 1, 1861	Spencer Meier .....	Sept. 1, 1869
John Dresser .....	Apr. 1, 1862	George Quinner .....	Aug. 19, 1857
John Hahn .....	Sept. 1, 1869	Patrick Stock, .....	April 1, 1862
Joseph Camble .....	Oct. 1, 1860	Joseph Beatty .....	June 1, 1861
Ludwig Borchart .....	Oct. 1, 1860	Carl Woelpern .....	Oct. 8, 1863
Fred W. Fenske .....	Apr. 15, 1872	Daniel Barry .....	Oct. 1, 1860
Hamilton Beatty .....	June 1, 1868	Hans Mansfield .....	Dec. 15, 1866
John Quinner .....	Aug. 1, 1863	Frederick Boettcher .....	Nov. 1, 1861
John Fiss .....	Nov. 1, 1861	Henrick Goebel .....	Nov. 1, 1862

The first marriage in the Township was performed in the residence of Chas. Nessay in 1859. James Lewis and Mary Hernining—Justice of the Peace, Hamilton Beatty officiating.

The first birth in Dryden Township: Elizabeth Callahan born in the year 1856.

The first death recorded in the Township occurred in September 1856, Robert Beatty, Junior. He died at the age of 25 years.

School District No. 18 was the first established in 1872; District No. 17 in 1872, District No. 19 in 1887, and District No. 73 in 1901. These district schools are still in use.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mountville was the first to be organized in Dryden, that was in the year 1866. Evangelical Church organized with 5 families in 1878. The Rev. Aug. Jedno was the first pastor. At present (1949) there are five flourishing churches in the Township, namely:

Mountville, St. John's—Rev E. Hartenberger

Gaylord, St. Paul's Lutheran—Rev. Geo. L. Matthaie

Gaylord, Immanuel Lutheran—Rev. Ernest Stahlke

Gaylord, St. Michael's Catholic—Rev. Harold Hesse

Gaylord, 1st. Congregational—Rev. Irving C. Campbell

The population at the time of the organization was approximately fifteen families. At the present time (1949) the population has increased to 670 (exclusive of Gaylord). There are 115 farm families.

Descendants of the original pioneers now living in Dryden Township:

Fredrick Wecker

John Quinner, 1864, at present still Quinner Estate.

Henry Wemeier, Wm. Wemeier, John Wemeier.

Fredrick Rose, Jake Rose, Theo. Rose, and Paul Rose.

Hamilton Beatty, J. R. Beatty, Ed. Helregel.

Rob. Beatty, Sam Beatty, Chas. Timm, Martin Hahn.

The Martin Bandelin farm has not changed names and the first land bought by Martin was in 1866 when he received his honorable discharge from the Civil War. He was married in 1867, and at present the fourth generation is growing up.

Generations are as follows: Martin Bandelin, Geo. H. Bandelin, Earl Bandelin, Janell Bandelin.

Martin Bandelin was a charter member of the Evangelical Church which was built in 1878.

Other farms which have not changed names since homesteading are: Marth and Boettcher farms.

Information furnished by George Bandelin and John Jaskin.

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## ***Sibley Township***

Sibley Township, like the county, was named after Henry Hastings Sibley. The earliest settlers, of whom little is known, were Norwegians who settled in the timbered southern part of the township.

Th first settlers were C. H. Spellman, H. H. Schmidt, and Harmon Moller- ing who settled on sections 12 and 13 in the year 1857.

The Township was organized July 9, 1864. The first officers were Wm. S. McEwen, Chas. H. Otting, and Ole Overson, supervisors. F. Kusske was elected overseer of the poor; M. R. Parks, clerk; H. Koch, treasurer; Benj. Snacken- berg, constable; C. R. Woodbury, justice. This election was held in the home of Henry Koch.

The first birth was that of a daughter to the C. H. Spellman's on October 2, 1859.

The first marriage took place in 1866 when Dorothy Briest became the wife of Charles Woehler.

The first death recorded was that of Mrs. Anna Otting on May 17, 1864.

### **SCHOOLS**

The first school was taught by Miss Blanche French in a private home. School District No. 9 was organized in 1864. It was extensive in area. The first officers were: C. H. Spellman, Henry Spellman, and August Dietz.

Joint School District No. 28 with most of its area in Nicollet County was organized later, followed by School District No. 36 in 1865.

School District No. 47 was organized in 1879 with James McEwen, clerk; J. Nerresson, treasurer; W. K. Skara, chairman. This school is now closed.

School District No. 53 was organized in 1881 with Wm. Spletstosser, treas- urer; Friedrich Manthey, clerk; Adolph Kusske, chairman.

School District No. 59 was organized in 1882 with James Traber, clerk; August Tscheu, treasurer; George Kuehner, chairman.

### **CHURCHES**

Trinity Lutheran church was organized in 1866 under Rev. Ferdinand Copelke. It had twenty families at that time. The first edifice was a log struc- ture. The church's cemetery is close to the church. In 1881 the present church, a frame building was erected. This congregation now has seventy families, a parish home built in 1938, and a modern parish hall built in 1947. Most of the township citizens are members of the Lutheran church belonging to the Nor- wegian Lutheran Church, Trinity, and St. Paul's of Gaylord.

The Township post station was established in 1865 in Section 25. Mr. French was the first postmaster. Until late in the 1880's mail was received once a week.

The following pioneers settled in Sibley Township before 1880: A. Ander- son, August Anderson, Wilhelm Bierstedt, Henry Bremmer, F. A. Briard, Samuel R. Buckley, Fredrick Dietz, John Goodman, Theo. Hedrich, George Kuehner, Gustave Kusske, Adolph Kusske, J. E. Kusske, Peter Larson, Ernest Manthey, Fred Manthey, Stephen Manthey, H. F. Otting, Julius Propp, John Rosenfeld, Andrew Rice, John Rice, Fred H. Schriber, August Severin, Ferdinand Sonnen- burg, C. H. Spellmann, Gunder Torgeson, Fred Tetslaff, and Johan Von Reedon.

Many of the descendants of these settlers are still living in the township. Others are now residing in Gaylord and in other parts of the county and state.

The population in 1880 was 499. At present (1949) 114 farm families live in Sibley Township with a total population of 565 persons.

Sibley Township is strictly a prairie township crossed by two branches of the Rush River. It has some small lakes and numerous marshes. The soil is deep and rich. The southern tier of the township is of virgin timber. Here the first Norwegians lived who founded the Norwegian Lutheran church.

Descendants of these pioneers have distinguished themselves in the business and professional fields.

Information furnished by Fred Bauer, Paul Ostermann and C. R. Dietz.

## ***Transit Township***

Transit is a prairie township located in the central part of Sibley County. The very first settlers lived on the shores of Indian Lake and along the shores of lesser lakes and marshes. These settlers abandoned their huts because of a lack of timber and wood for fuel.

Transit received its name from the transit, a surveying instrument. The surveyors so named it because no one came forth with a suggestion at the time of laying it out.

Frederick Muchow settled first on Section 1 in 1858. The farm is still in the Muchow family. He was the only farmer in the Township until 1860 when Ezra Bailey took up a claim on Section 10, followed by F. Warnka, Ralph Wilkins, August Gruenwaldt, and a Mr. Reimer. From 1858 to 1866 the town experienced a fluctuation in population, that is, many people gave up living here because of the hardships engendered by lack of timber. By 1866 enough improvements and roads and permanent settlers lived in Transit to permit official organization. That year, 1866, A. G. Coon was elected chairman; John Baumeister, supervisor; L. S. Crandall, clerk; C. Stressmann, assessor; Frederick Muchow, treasurer; and C. Stressmann, justice.

Settlers in the eastern part of Transit joined with settlers of Dryden in organizing Mountville Church. This church for many years operated two large parochial schools. A Catholic Church also was built here in the early 1860's.

Transit Township has four school districts: Joint School District No. 39 with the school house in McLeod County, School Districts No. 44, 49, and 52. School District No. 44 is now (1949) closed.

Transit had three postoffices: Transit Postoffice established in 1867 with L. S. Crandall, postmaster; Eagle City Postoffice in Section 29 which formerly was in Alfsborg Township with Ole Olson as postmaster. In 1881 the new postmaster was E. A. Campbell. Mountville Postoffice had as its first postmaster Louis Uber, succeeded in 1881 by Thomas Whelan. These postoffices were served by stage coach.

Mountville Village platted in 1872 was thought to hold possibilities of becoming a big prairie city. It was surveyed in 1872 by Adam Buck on land owned by F. Thunemann and L. and W. Uber. The placing of the railroads caused the demise of Mountville, New Rome, Faxon and contributed to the present status of New Auburn village.

At present the citizens of Transit are members of churches in Mountville, Winthrop, and Penn Township in McLeod County.

Some of the earliest settlers were: M. F. Babcock, George K. Chapin, O. B. Coon, Erick Erickson, Patrick Gallagher, Robert J. Hall, August Hass, Peter Keenan, George Kruger, Charles Maxon, August Muchow, Charles Rathke, German Soper, John C. Whelan, and K. F. Whelan.

Transit now is one of the most prosperous of the county's townships. It is a level plain with very fertile soil. Its people are energetic and hard working modern farmers.

Transit has a population of 569 persons living on 125 farms. The German emigrants who came in the late 1860's bought out the Irish and English, and the descendants of these German immigrants dominate in Transit.

## *Alfsborg Township*

So named from a province in Sweden where the first settlers came from.

Andrew Gustafson claimed to be the first settler, 1864, Sec. 32; John J. Engelbertson Sec. 26; Swen Peter Eld Sec. 25; Lars Hank Sec. 26; Johannes Hed Sec. 34; Jonas Olson Sec. 28; Jonas Johnson Sec. 34; Johannes Ostberg Sec. 32. All of these were charter members of the now Bernadotte Lutheran church located across the county line of Nicollet. Church organized May 4, 1886.

Date of organization. By petition of C. J. Larson and 28 other legal voters of the territory, to the county commissioners dated January 7, 1869, the territory comprising Townships 112R 29, was by order of said county commissioners set aside as a separate township from Cornish and Severance (then called Clear Lake) and an election was set by the commissioners for January 26, 1869, at the Andrew Gustafson house. The acting officers for this election were Peter Olson, chairman; Swan Anderson and Ola Engdahl, Judges of Election; John Engelbretson and Herman Anderson, Clerks. Sworn in by Andrew Wass, the Justice of Peace.

Result of this election: Supervisors, Andrew Swanson (chairman), Peter Olson, Andrew Gustafson. Clerk, Herman Anderson. Treasurer, John Hed. Assessor, Ola Engdahl. Justices, Swan Anderson and Herman Anderson.

Other pioneer families that homesteaded or bought land prior to 1870: Charley Anderson, Sec. 7 '69; Carl W. Anderson, Sec. 4 '65-'69; Peter Anderson, Sec. 34 '62-'69. Andrew Bengston came in 1856 to this country and in 1862 enlisted in the Army and discharged in 1865 (was wounded in service) Sec. 13; Peter Brown Sec. 10 '64-'69; Gustaf Gustafson, Sec. 33 '55-'70. A brother Charles served in the Army and died in service. August Johnson, Sec. 34 '67; C. J. Larson, Sec. 10 '65-'67 (served as State Senator 1894-1902); John Lundberg Sec. 34 '61-'67; Andrew Malm Sec. 2 '65-'68; Philip Mee, Sec. 2 '66-'70; August Morshare, Sec. 30 '67-'68 (his father, John came to America 1865); Erick Olson, Sec. 6 '66-'69; Swen Ryden, Sec. 9 '69-'70; Johannes Schoberg, Sec. 14 '68-'70; Charles A. Swanson, Sec. 6 '66-'68 (served as postmaster of Eagle City for 7 years); Andrew Lager, Sec. 14 '69.

First marriage on record, March, 1864: Jonas Olson to Johanna Hed.

First birth: Ida Emily Gustafson, January 20, 1870.

First death: Lillian Bertha Wolter, January 26, 1872.

The first school was organized by petition of Erick Brug and others to the county commissioners and on motion the south  $\frac{1}{2}$  of township 112R29 was set apart as one school, District 46, July 25, 1867. First record of the enrollment available is that of 1870, with 27 pupils. This District for some time and until 1885, had two school houses under the control of one school board known as the East and West. In 1885 this district was divided into two equal areas and the West half became Dist. 68. The first minutes available for Dist. 46 are dated 1876, and the officers at this time were: Jonas Olson, moderator; John Boren, clerk and Andrew Gustafson, director. It was voted to have 4 months school for the year; 2 months in the winter beginning October 1, and 2 months in the summer, beginning April 1. For the same year Angus McGinnis signed a teacher's contract for two months of school at \$30.00 per month, beginning Sept. 1, 1876.

District 54 was organized Sept. 27, 1872. The first school meeting on record dates back to Oct. 3, 1874 (held in the school house). Clark Wolter was chosen moderator, Peter Sandberg, clerk for a term of 3 years and

Clark Wolter, treasurer for 2 years and C. J. Larson, director for one year. It was voted to hold 3 months school in the summer; it was voted to raise a tax of \$100.00 to the building fund; and \$50.00 voted to the teachers wages fund. District 68 was organized July 21, 1885. It is now closed and school property sold.

Present enrollment in Dist. 46, 10 pupils; present enrollment in Dist. 54, 18 pupils. District 54 since 1916 has a two room brick school house with full basement, oil burning furnace, indoor toilets, good cloak rooms and a library, also ample play ground. Dist. 46 has a well equipped school and good location.

First church organized within the township was the First Lutheran Church of Winthrop, in February, 1884. Services were held in private homes before it was organized, as early as 1882 in the Erick Olson home. The organization meeting seems to have taken place in the Malmquist-Chilstrom store. Its first vice-pastor was C. M. Ryden of Bernadotte, 1884, and J. Lundquist, 1885-86. First resident pastor, L. P. Bergstrom, 1887-1909. First deacons were Oke Anderson, Peter Holmquist and John W. Olson. First Sunday School superintendent was Oke Anderson. The First Lutheran church had 51 charter members. Present membership is about 600.

There have been four other churches organized in this territory since 1884. The Mission Covenant, the Methodist, the Zion Lutheran, the Saint Francis Catholic church. There are no cemeteries located within the township.

Population at the time of organization, approximately 47.

Population in 1948, 652.

The physical features of this territory is a rolling prairie with numerous sloughs and marshes draining eastward by middle and south branches of the Rush River. Only small patches of natural timber of oak, ash, and elm are found in Sections 6 and 7. Sand Lake, located in Section 19, and Mud Lake in Section 7, originally known as Cummings Lake, now drained, are the only so-called lakes.

Number of farms at present, 140; 160 families.

Descendants of original pioneers now living within this Township: Andrew Gustafson, 1st; Arvid Gustafson and Mrs. Edwin Ross, 3rd; Garfield Ross and Mrs. Harvey Stolt, 4th; John Hed, 1st; Mrs. Alfred Palmer and Clifford R. Larson, 3rd; Linton and Dennis Palmer, 4th; Adrienne Palmer, 5th; August Johnson, 1st; F. G. A. and Richard and Ellen Johnson, 2nd; Johannes Erickson, 1st; Mrs. John Toreen, 2nd; Robert Toreen and Mrs. Blanche Swanson, 3rd; Alton Swanson, 4th; Andrew Swanson, 1st; A. J. Lind, Stanley Lind and Mabel Lind, 3rd; Charles, Marjorie, Donald, Mark and Dean Lind, 4th; Johannes Schoberg, 1st; Clemens Schoberg, 3rd; Shirley and Dale Schoberg, 4th; Andrew Lager, 1st; August Lager, 2nd; Abdon and Allen Lager and Mrs. Linton Palmer, 3rd; Vianne Lager, Carolyn and Jean Marie Lager, 4th.

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## *Severance Township*

Severance Township was named after a prominent pioneer of the county. Some of its first settlers, about 1868, were Mr. and Mrs. Swan Lindstrom, Gust Peterson, Anna Benson and son, Andrew Benson, Peter Larson, Andrew Gulbranson, Mr. and Mrs. John Jacobson, John F. Peterson and Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Voss.

It was organized as a township in the year of 1870, with John D. Jacobson, Peter Larson, Peter Swedlund, John Lindstrom and Franz Biebl serving as the first township officers.

The same year the township was organized the following families home-

steaded there: Mr. and Mrs. Peter Brunsberg, Mr. and Mrs. Anton Hanson, Mr. Peter Melander, Mr. and Mrs. John Olson, Mr. and Mrs. Franz Biebl, Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Lundin, Mr. and Mrs. Ole Monson, Mr. and Mrs. Erich Peterson, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Biebl, Mr. and Mrs. Johann Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Andreas Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sjogren, Mr. and Mrs. Johann Lagerstedt, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Melander, Mr. and Mrs. Lars Larson, Mr. and Mrs. Tollef Christofferson.

The first marriage was that of Ole Larson to Mathea Monson at the Clear Lake Norwegian Lutheran church in 1874. The first child born in Severance was Betsy Jacobson and the first death was that of Mr. Swan Lindstrom.

School District No. 57 was started in the fall of 1873 with John Lind (who later became Governor of Minnesota) as the first teacher.

The pupils were John August Carlson, Charley Carlson, Mary Jacobson, Frank Swedlund, Andrew Swedlund, Mary Swedlund, Lewis Lindstrand, Bennett Lindstrom, Alfred Linstrom, Emily Jacobson, Emma Lindstrom, John Larson, Anna Larson, and Catherine Larson. The first school board members were John D. Jacobson, treasurer, Peter Swedlund, Clerk, and Ole Monson, Director. The district comprised the east half of Severance until 1883.

School District No. 55 was organized March 14, 1874, comprising the west half of Severance township. John Johnson was elected clerk, A. Larson director, Franz Biebl, treasurer, and Gustav Kylander was the first teacher. The first pupils were Christ Christofferson, Anton Olson, Christian Monson, Mattia Monson, Franz Biebl, Jr., Andrew Biebl, Edla Hokanson, John Grosam, Mary Grosam, Betty Maria Anderson, Anton Anderson and two Monsons. The district was the west half of Severance until 1883. School District No. 65 was organized July 25, 1883. The first meeting of election was held at the Peter Rausmerson home September 1, 1883 and the following board was elected: Christoffer Dahl, Director, Peter Rausmerson, Treasurer, Iver Bakke, Clerk. Four months of school was voted on. Caroline Holtye was the first teacher and she had 41 pupils. Independent School District No. 64 of Gibbon, was organized the same day as District No. 65.

School District No. 78 was organized May 14, 1890. The first board to serve was Jonas Anderson, Treasurer, Charles Anderson, Clerk, and Hans Miller, Director. Oscar Peterson was the first teacher with about forty pupils.

Rural Districts 55, 57, 65 and 78 are all in operation as one teacher schools with about 65 pupils.

The first church to organize was the Clear Lake Swedish Baptist church on October 21, 1871, with ten charter members, namely, John P. Holmquist, Mr. and Mrs. John Holmquist, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Carlson, Peter Melander, Frank Melander, Mrs. Jenny Rosenquist, John A. Peterson and E. S. Johnson. John Holmquist was the first pastor, Jo. D. Jacobson, deacon, John Holmquist, first trustee, J. M. Carlson, first Secretary and Treasurer. The first to be united in marriage in the church was Mathias Larson to Cathrina Larson in 1883. First funeral was that of Mrs. Erick Swedlund on September 23, 1883.

The year following (1872) the Clear Lake Norwegian Lutheran church was organized. The charter members were Ole Monson, Simon Monson, Tollef Christofferson, Anton Hanson, John Brunsberg, Christoffer Dahl and Ole O. Whim. The first resident pastor was Rev. E. Bergh. Anton Hanson, Tollef Christofferson and Ole Larson served as first trustees. The first couple married in its membership was that of Mathea Monson to Ole Larson in the year of 1874.

The first infants baptized were Ole Dahl and Agnes Brunsberg. The first church built in 1880 was destroyed by the tornado that swept over the south west corner of Severance in 1881. It was rebuilt the following year 1882.

In the Village of Gibbon, which is located in Severance township are also three churches, The Immanuel Lutheran church, organized in January 1885. The first pastor was Rev. J. Frey. A. Papke, H. Stockman, F. Burdorf, K. Bahr and C. Diessner composed the first church board. They also have maintained

their own parochial school.

The St. Willibrord Catholic church was organized in 1886. The first priest to serve here was Father Jensen, came up from Henderson on horseback. The first officers of the church were Wenzel Friedl, Conrad Eckert, Frank Weber and Frank McPatten. The first church was built in 1889.

The Augustana Evangelical Lutheran church was organized January 12, 1899 by Rev. C. M. Ryden. The first meetings were held in the school house. The first trustees were C. L. Lindstrand, A. E. Nelson, and O. N. Johnson, and the first deacons were Claus Lager, O. N. Johnson and C. L. Lindstrand. The first church building was dedicated in 1900.

The various churches maintain their own cemeteries which were started about the same time as the congregations. Several have put their cemetery on a perpetual care establishing a fund, the interest on which will pay for upkeep until the Great Day of the Lord.

The population of Severance Township at the time of organization was about 15 and at present is around 600 with 120 farms and families. The soil of Severance township is heavy black loam, slightly rolling. Two lakes are within its borders, Clear Lake in Southeast corner and Lake Swan in West central. A railroad crosses the Northern part with State Highway No. 19 alongside.

Some of the descendants of the original pioneers now living here are as follows: Edgar Peterson, from Mr. and Mrs. Gustav Peterson; Albert Jacobson, from Mr. and Mrs. John D. Jacobson; Christ Christofferson, from Mr. and Mrs. Tollef Christofferson; Emil Peterson, from Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Peterson; Mrs. Anna Peterson and Daniel Melander, from Mr. and Mrs. Frank Melander; Albert and Arthur Sjogren, from Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Sjogren; John Nordlund, from Mr. and Mrs. Lars Larson; John Lagerstedt, from Mr. and Mrs. Johann Lagerstedt; George Biebl, Allie Biebl, Mrs. Rose Bullemer, Mrs. Frank Walter, Mrs. Lester Isakson, from Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Biebl.

The old Henderson-Fort Ridgely road or trail crossed Severance in about the middle, the wheel tracks of which were still visible when the pioneers came, so were also the bridges and grades.

The "Grasshopper years" were very trying on the pioneers (1872-1874) they came on July 4th 1872, 1873, 1874 and remained until 1874 and the following year the soil was so rich crops were almost a failure forcing some to leave their families and go east even to Red Wing, Minnesota for employment. Ahlbrecht, Jacobson and Gidemar had the first horse power thresher in 1871. Mrs. Magnus Carlson became entangled in the tumbling rod of it and was nearly killed but for the quick thinking of the crew. The first steam thresher was in 1886.

Information furnished by Harold Nordlund.

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## ***Cornish Township***

Cornish township was named by J. B. Wakefield, a pioneer settler, in honor of his native town, Cornish, New Hampshire.

There were but few settlers previous to 1871. A few claims were located in the 1860's. Among the first on record is that of Alonzo C. Wakefield, S.E. quarter section 28, filed November 29, 1865. On the same date, Elias F. Kimball registered for the N.E. quarter in the same section. Other claims were Wm. Wakefield, S.W. quarter section 4, filed August 24, 1866. Josiah Wakefield, N.E. quarter section 8, August 24, 1866. J. B. Wakefield, N.W. quarter section 28 filed January 1, 1868 and James Wakefield, N.E. quarter section 22. Others locating about the same time were G. H. Gaylord, Section 22. Wm James, section 28. Other pioneers arriving in the late sixties, were A. B. Bennet. John Holmquist, John Sander, Bengt Strom, P. E. Lunderborg, Frederick Olson, Gabriel Anderson, Nels Johnson, Gustaf Carlson. Magnus Carlson and Gilbert Olson. They settled in the southern portion of the town. H. W. Dunwell, Peter

Hagberg, Charles Swanson and Alexander Anderson located in Section's 8, 9, and 18.

In the northern part of the town Swan Kulander homesteaded in 1868. Other pioneers were Andrew Anderson, Charles Anderson, Swan Kyrklund and A. P. Eklund.

Swen Kyrklund was the owner of the first threshing machine in the community, same being operated with horse power. Mr. Kyrklund met with a fatal accident while operating the machine. His death occurred September 18, 1874.

Among the early pioneers were Gustaf and Katherine Lind who immigrated from Sweden, homesteading in Section 28. Their son John was elected Congressman from this district, serving several terms. In 1898 he was elected Governor of Minnesota, serving two years. He was again elected to Congress from the 5th Con. District, serving his state and country with honor and distinction and a credit to the township in which he made his boyhood home.

The first town meeting for the purpose of organization was held January 25, 1871 at the home of J. B. Wakefield and the officers elected were: Supervisors, G. H. Gaylord, Chairman, Swan Peterson and Josiah Wakefield, Clerk, Wm. Wakefield, Treasurer, A. C. Wakefield, Justices of the Peace, Wm. Wakefield and J. B. Wakefield, Constable, A. Anderson. The voters at the first town meeting were the following: J. B. Wakefield, Josiah Wakefield, A. W. Wakefield, A. B. Bennett, Frederick Olson, C. H. Gaylord, Howard Lathrop, Swan Peterson, Ezra Bennett, E. F. Kinball, Thomas Eriscon and Gabriel Anderson.

A county history published in 1881 lists the first birth as that of Dora, daughter of E. F. and Mary Kimball. The first recorded marriage took place in July 1869, Miss Mahala Wright becoming Mrs. Josiah Wakefield. A child born to the couple in 1870 lived but a short time and was buried on the C. H. Gaylord farm in section 22. The first birth entered in the township records was that of Ambros, son of G. H. and Eliza Gaylord, July 16, 1871. The first death listed in the records was that of Albert Lind, brother of the late Governor John Lind, and son of Gustaf and Katherine Lind. The child died January 24, 1873 at the age of three months. The first postmaster appointed in 1869 was Alonzo Wakefield.

The first school District organized was No. 50, on July 10, 1869 and a school term began that fall with Miss Lydia Truman as teacher. The district comprised almost the entire east half of the township and section's 4, 9, 16 and 21 from the western half of the township. A school house was built in section 22. As new settlers moved in the school became inadequate to handle the number of pupils wanting to attend. So on May 10, 1872 the district was reorganized and the boundaries readjusted to where they are today. The school building was enlarged and moved to section 34. The first board was composed of Wm. Wakefield, clerk, Elias F. Kimball, treasurer, Swan Peterson, director.

District No. 56 was organized March 18, 1873, being composed of territory in both Sibley and Nicollet counties. A building was erected in section 31. The first board was composed of Nels Johnson, clerk, Olaf Carlson, treasurer, John P. Shogren, director.

District No. 61 was organized July 28, 1882, the meeting being held at the home of Charles Anderson. A building was erected the same year. The first term had an enrollment of 17 with Anna E. Scriber, teacher. Members of the first board were C. W. Woodbury, clerk, Peter Erickson, treasurer, S. J. Peterson, director.

District No. 72 was organized October 27, 1886, the school building was erected in section 8. Members of the first board were Holly Alerson, clerk, Louis Lorin, treasurer, N. G. Hagberg, director.

All of the schools are still operating with the exception of No. 50 which is closed.

The early pioneers were loyal to their religious belief and gave early

attention to Worship of God. Congregations were formed and edifices erected.

The Clear Lake Lutheran Church, located in section 30, was organized October 30, 1871 with 20 charter members. The Rev. C. M. Ryden of Bernadotte acting as chairman of the meeting. A church building was erected, parsonage built and a cemetery laid out. The present membership is 125. The Rev. Verner C. Johnson is pastor.

The Methodist church, located in section 34 was organized March 10, 1877 with 32 charter members. The meeting being held at the Bengt Strom home. The Rev. E. Christofferson of Scandian Grove serving as chairman of the meeting also continuing to give monthly visits to the newly formed congregation. A. P. Johnson, a layman, often had charge of the services in the absence of a pastor. A church edifice was erected and dedicated in June 1879. Later a

# MAKERS OF MINNESOTA

Sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society



## John Lind

14th GOVERNOR OF MINNESOTA,  
JAN. 2, 1899 - JAN. 7, 1901.



HIS AMBITION WAS TO BE A CIVIL ENGINEER, BUT AN ACCIDENT RESULTING IN THE LOSS OF HIS LEFT HAND CHANGED HIS PLANS AND CAREER. HE BECAME A SCHOOLTEACHER AND LAWYER. IN 1886 HE WAS ELECTED TO CONGRESS, THE FIRST SWEDISH-AMERICAN TO WIN THAT HONOR.



NICKNAMED "HONEST JOHN", LIND SERVED IN CONGRESS FROM 1887 TO 1893 AND AGAIN FROM 1903 TO 1905. IN CONGRESS HE WAS ACTIVELY INTERESTED IN INDIAN AFFAIRS AND IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE INTERSTATE COMMERCE ACT. HE WAS AN AUTHORITY ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PUBLIC LANDS.



ENDORSED BY THE POPULIST AND DEMOCRAT PARTIES, HE WAS THE FIRST CANDIDATE TO DEFEAT A REPUBLICAN FOR THE GOVERNORSHIP IN MINN. SINCE BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR.

1849 Minnesota Territorial Centennial 1949 © K. Pederson KERN

parsonage was built and a cemetery located near the church. The congregation later built a church at Lafayette, they are operating as one congregation now. The Rev. C. D. Cook is the present pastor.

A cemetery is located in section one. This is owned and controlled by the First Lutheran Church at Winthrop.

At the time of organization the population was about 50. The Federal census of 1880 gives the population as 274. Assessed valuation of Real estate

\$102,770. Personal property tax valuation \$13,417. In 1940 the population was 585 and the assessed valuation \$585,810.

The surface of the township is moderately rolling, the land has a clay sub soil covered with deep black loam, very productive and well adapted to agriculture. In the early days wheat was the main crop raised. This gave way to a diversified farming. Hog raising and dairying are now chiefly carried on. There are at present 132 farms in the township.

Two branches of Rush River crosses the township, the middle branch crosses the north line in section 5, flowing in a south easterly direction and crosses the east line in section 13. The south branch enters the township in section 19 running across the township, crossing the eastern line in section 36. Sand Lake is located along the eastern boundary.

From a map published in 1872 it appears that the first road in the township was the old Fort Ridgely road which ran past the Eagle City Post Office, entering Cornish at N.E. corner of section 12, going in south westerly direction crossing Rush River in section 12 turing in a westerly direction touching the corner of section 13 and crossing section 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18. Traces of this historic road are still to be found. This was the only thorough fare through the township in the pioneer period. Tributary trails branched off from this road, one going past the Cornish Post office in section 22 and another running past Cottonwood Lake.

The township has always taken considerable pride in the building and upkeep of its highways, with the result that at present a network of well kept and graveled highways covers the town. A paved state highway No. 19 runs along the northern boundary and Trunk Highway No. 15 along the eastern boundary. The trunk highways, State aid and County roads now advanced to a splendid status and well maintained, represent an outstanding phase of progress in the township.

Information furnished by J. Ed. Anderson and Emil Anderson.

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## ***Grafton Township***

Located away out in the northwestern corner of the country, Grafton Township seems almost isolated from the rest of the county. This was due to the fact that Penn and Round Grove Townships were given to McLeod County so that Faxon Township could be added to Sibley County. Perhaps it was so named in honor of an Englishman, Lord Grafton.

The first settlers in Grafton Township arrived in 1870. Among them were James Furlong, John Southard, A. M. Burdick and Alfred Foss. It was not until 1873 that enough settlers came to organize the Township. This occurred in September 1873. Officers then elected were: A. M. Burdick, chairman; George Asal, and Joseph Mingo, supervisors; George Gardner, clerk; George Asal, assessor; William Knowles, treasurer; A. M. Burdick and L. M. Harrington, Justices.

Mary Isabelle Gardner was the first child born in the Township. She was born November 6, 1873.

The death of Albert Tucker June 24, 1874 was the first reported in Grafton Township.

A school was opened in a log house in Section 14 in the year 1874. The teacher was a Miss Louisa Jenks.

The Lutherans were the first to establish a church in Grafton. This congregation was formed in January 1889, with 24 voting members under the guidance of Rev. B. Ehwald. The first baptized was Emma Ottilie Stuber, daughter of W. M. Stuber and his wife Antonia nee Blum. There are no churches at present (1949) in Grafton Township. They have been moved to the village of Buffalo Lake.

First and early settlers are:

Henry Albrecht .....	1879
Robert Greig .....	1875
Joseph Mautner .....	1877
R. D. Donaldson .....	1877
Ole Rector .....	1873
George Gardner .....	1873
James Greig .....	1874
August Burgstahler .....	1869

Simon Moor .....	1878
J. H. Mullen .....	
Alfred Foss .....	1872
John Greig .....	1873
William Baumgarten .....	1874
D. A. Davis .....	1872
Louis Forcier .....	1871
John E. Senescall .....	1879

This township is prairie land with its quota of lakes and marshes. When organized there was a lake named Bucks Lake. This lake has been drained and added about 350 acres farm land to the township.

Descendants of original pioneers now living in the township are: Grant Washington Antonsen, the grandson of John Antonsen and August Burgstahler. Philip Burgstahler, the grandson of August Burgstahler. Ray Harrington descendant of the first English settlers.

Present population is 661, with 114 families.

School District No. 8, one of the first of the county's schools, was organized in the early 1860's by the English settlers who settled the area. These people arrived by covered wagon and on foot and horseback. In order of organization, the school districts in Grafton Township are: No. 8, 20, 40, 67, and 79. School District No. 8 is still open and operating. The others are closed. Districts No. 40 and No. 79 have sold their school buildings.

Information furnished by: Grant W. Antonsen and Mrs. Arthur Klucas.

## ***Bismarck Township***

Why so named: It was named in honor of the "Iron Chancellor," Otto von Bismarck of Germany.

First Settlers: Louis Kiefer, Anton Veyankee, August Kuehlhorn, Friedrich Pagel, Julius Rosnau, Julius Bulau, John Schultz, Daniel Palmer, August Reinlein, Mickel Schultz, Carl Kley, Sam Clevenger, Mickel King, J. L. Maxson, L. Holz, J. H. Houston, E. H. Babcock, Matthew Burdick, Wm. Schauer, Wm. Redetzke, Wm. Buntrock, Andre Miller, Carl Habeck.

Date of Organization: July 21, 1874. First Township Officers: Supervisors: Mickel King, J. L. Maxson and L. Holz; Clerk, Sam Clevenger; Justices of the Peace, Louis Kiefer and E. H. Babcock; Constables, Matthew Burdick and Wm. Schauer.

Pioneer Families (Those who homesteaded): Louis Kiefer, Anton Veyankee, Fred and Wm. Lickfett, Sam Clevenger, Reinhard Fernbach, John McMahon, Wm. Schauer, Christian Becke, John Boelter, Albert Schattschneider, Herman Schuette, Julius Bulau, Friedrich Braun and Friedrich Moerke.

First Marriage, unknown; first birth, Gus Krueger, August 25, 1870; first death, Alvina Orloff, May 16, 1874.

### **School Districts**

First Schools, officers, date of organization, etc. 1878—What is now Dist. 51. Officers: Dan Palmer, Wm. Schauer, Karl Falk. 1886—what is now Dist. 70, officers: J. W. Stark, Herman Stark Sr., and Gus Boelter. Teacher, Mary Canfield, paid \$33.00 per month. 1894—what is now Dist. 76, officers, Martin Wick and Wm. Leske. The first teacher was George S. Truman. The school was held for four months. The teacher was paid \$33.00 per month. It was expected that the teacher board himself. 1895—what is now Dist. 77, officers: Sam Clevenger, Herman Schuette and Wm. Schauer.

Present School Status: There has been no change in organization or in the number of school districts. They are at present all active.

First Church (first pastor, denomination, etc.): The devout Lutheran settlers started worship in and among their homes during the year 1871. In 1879 the first Lutheran church was established in the township with a membership of 15 families, served by the Rev. Frese. This small church served the needs of the people until 1892, when the present structure was built. In 1882, St. John's Luth. church had a membership of 60 families. In 1894, a few faithful Christians of the Evangelical faith organized a small church. The church was destroyed by a cyclone, but was rebuilt in 1891. The first church had a membership of eight families.

Present Churches and Facts: In 1948, the building erected in 1892 was extensively remodeled. The roll now boasts of 100 active families. The cemetery laid out by the founding fathers is still serving the needs of the church. The Rev. A. Schira is the present pastor of St. John's Luth. church. In a day when so many rural churches are simply ghosts of the bygone days, the members of St. John's Lutheran church, Bismarck township are to be commended for their faith and steadfastness in making the church of their fathers one of the finest churches in the community.

Due to the small membership, the Evangelical church is now closed.

Population at time of organization: Information is insufficient.

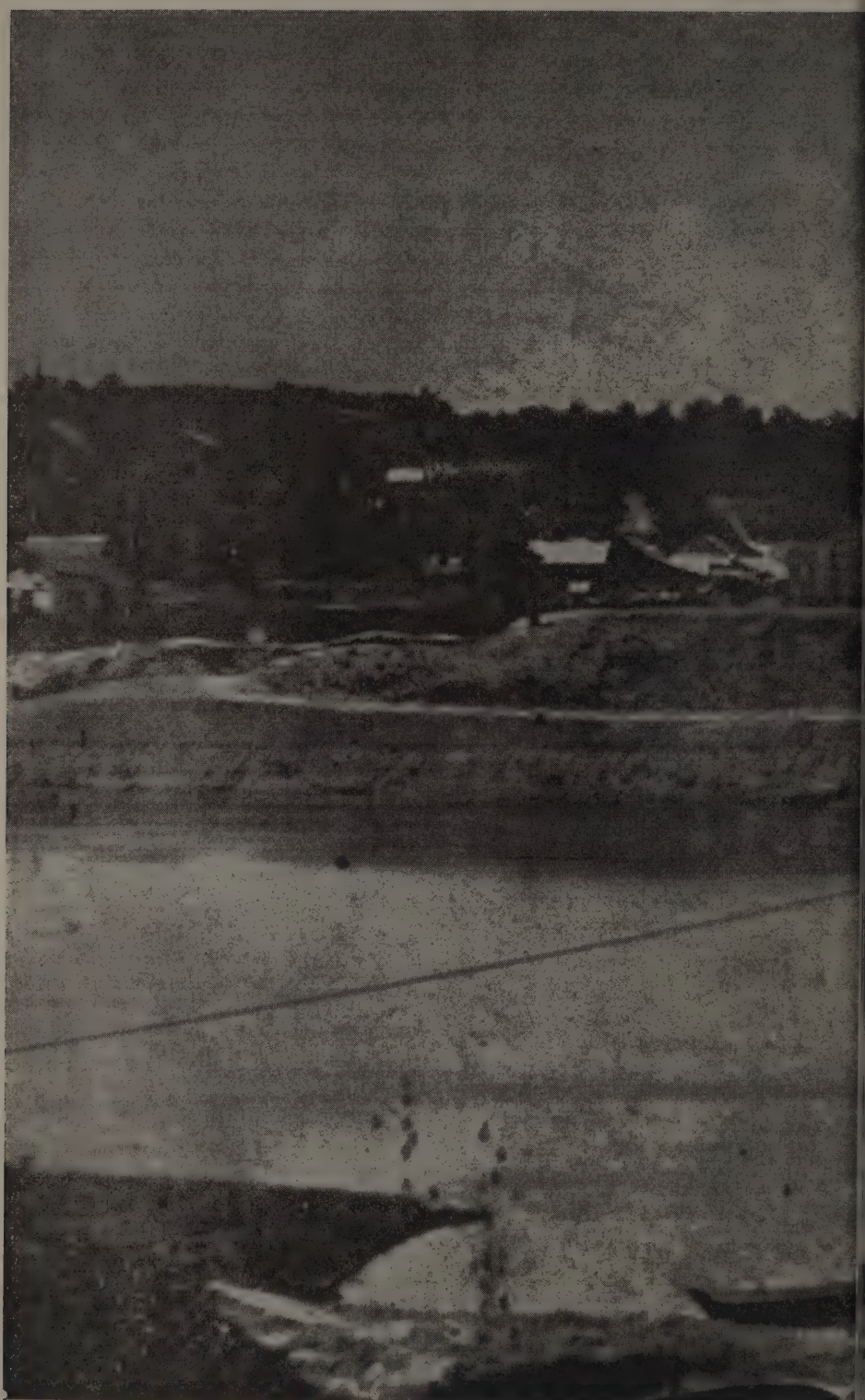
Present population: consult 1940 census. (598).

Physical features, topography, soil, rivers, etc.: Bismarck Township contains 36 square miles. The general topography is gently rolling. Although Mother Nature left Bismarck void of rivers and lakes, she managed to squeeze in several duck sloughs. Bismarck's wealth lies in the rich, black loam soil. Number of farms and families at present, 144.

Descendants of original pioneers now living in township:

Descendant	From Whom Descended
Harry Bulau	Julius Bulau
Ferdinand Stark	Herman Stark, Sr.
Emil Kley	Carl Kley
L. F. Boehlke	Louis Kiefer
John, Otto and Carl Pagel	Friedrich Pagel
Julius Schultz	John Schultz
August Gutknecht	Wm. Schauer
Wm. Redetzke	Wm. Redetzke
Herbert Buntrock	Julius Buntrock
Carl Schuette	Herman Schuette
Leo and Ralph Lawrenz	August Lawrenz
Richard Gaulke	Albert Gaulke
Martin Becke	Christian Becke
Howard Rosnau	Julius Rosnau

General Remarks: In 1879, the greatest grasshopper scourge that the state has ever known visited Bismarck township. The plague continued for three years. Everything edible and things non-edible were consumed. The hoppers literally eclipsed the sun when they would take off en masse. To keep their families alive, the settlers walked 60-70 miles to obtain work.





## *Moltke Township*

The last of Sibley County Townships to officially organize was Moltke, which received its name in honor of the Prussian General, Count Moltke. Its position is the most westerly of the middle tier of Townships in the county.

Settlers arrived and took claims, or purchased in the following order: W. M. Hoefer, on Section 24, in 1875; J. P. Blake on Section 26, in 1876; followed soon after by John Atrops on Section 10; in 1877, August Papke located upon Section 29; there being no more farms opened until 1878, during which year a colony of fifteen families located at one time.

On the 21st of August, 1878, an election was held, and the township organized, with the following officers: J. P. Blake, Chairman; John Atrops and William Hoefer, Board of Supervisors; F. W. Biermann, Clerk, William Hoefer Jr., Assessor; Christ Buerkle Sr., Treasurer; Louise Neukirch and F. W. Biermann, Justices. The present township officers are Arthur Buerkle, Chairman; Paul W. Meyer and Albert Gruenhagen, Supervisors; Edgar J. Niebuhr, Clerk; William Uetzmann, Assessor; Arthur Harms, Treasurer; Reinhold Vorwerk, Justice; and Ellsworth Wittenberg, Constable.

On the 23rd of December, 1879, the first marriage took place at the residence of the bride's parents. Henry Seabrandt and Miss Margaret Atrops were united by the Reverend Henry Albrecht.

The first birth occurred in 1875, a child being born to Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Hoefer.

No death was recorded until March 9, 1880, when the daughter of F. W. and Emma Biermann died, and was buried in the Lutheran cemetery, which had previously been laid out.

The township is one-half mile wider along the West side than regularly assigned to a township. The surface was an undulating prairie, containing marshes and several small lakes; the largest of which was called Alkali. At the present time all marshes and lakes are drained. Alkali Lake was drained in 1920, and is now producing large crops, most of which are sugar beets.

Most of the township is level land good for producing crops. Most farmers are now using heavy fertilizer on legumes, pastures and meadows, which the A.A.A. pays a part of, to help keep the land in good condition for the coming generation.

The farm places, as a whole in the township, have large wood lots planted around their farm buildings for windbreak purposes, and have very fine sets of buildings, most of which have modern conveniences.

The center branch of Rush River, with its head waters starting near the Northwest corner of the township, and running through the center of the township towards the Southeast corner, drains over fifty percent of the water in the township. The only time it has water in it is in the Spring and during wet seasons.

The township only had one land mark, which was called the Blox Hill. It was a very high hill, and could be seen for many miles, before gravel was removed from the top, and it was leveled off. There is very little gravel left in the township now, and it has to be hauled between fifteen and twenty miles for keeping the roads in good shape.

The people of the township are well supplied with good roads. Patrol graders keep them in good order during the summer, and the county snow-plows keep them open during the winter. It is very seldom that the roads are blocked with snow for more than a day or two. The township has forty-four miles of town roads, 19 miles of county aid roads, and 6½ miles of state aid roads.

In 1896 the township bought the old church from the St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran congregation, to be used as a Town Hall, and moved it across the road on the North side in Section 15, and in 1917 purchased a piece of land from John P. Meyer, then took the old building down and built a new hall,

20 x 40 feet, which today is a nice meeting place for elections and many other organizations.

In 1880 the first assessed valuation on real estate was \$75,713.00 and personal property \$6,025.00, and a total tax to be paid was \$1,742.05 of which \$115.70 was delinquent. The 1948 tax returns showed assessed value for real estate \$581,641.00 and personal property \$111,706.00. The total tax paid was \$42,949.15 with no delinquents. Moltke is the highest tax paying township in the county.

In 1880 the first mail deliveries were made into the township by Christ Buerkle Jr. It was brought from Mountville, which was a place not far from where Gaylord is now, and was distributed at the Pat Blake farm in Section 26 of Moltke Township. In 1904 daily Rural Free mail deliveries were started.

At the time the township was organized it had a population of one hundred. At present it has a population of 591 with 123 families and 126 farms.

On September 27, 1893 the Village of Gibbon purchased one and one-half acres of land from Henry Knipple on the South side in Section 35, in the S.E. quarter for a cemetery.

On July 8, 1897, Moltke Township purchased a lot on the Village cemetery for the burial of strangers, whom the township has to bury.

July 5, 1903 the first telephone line was built by the Nicollet County Telephone Company. On December 31, 1929 the Tri-State Telephone and Telegraph Company bought the line from the Nicollet County Telephone Company. The Tri-State Company merged with the Northwestern Bell Telephone Company in the fall of 1941. At the present time 95% of all the farms in Moltke Township have telephone service.

Electric lights started in 1915 with a few home plants for lighting. In 1929 the Northern States Power Company built a high line through the township, and about forty farmers were hooked up for lights at that time. In 1938 the R.E.A. also built lines in the township. At the present time 98% of all the farms have electricity.

Tree claims, the acquiring of 160 acres of land by planting 10 acres of trees per farm were taken by the following people: John Atrops, William Hoefler, Fred V. Burdorf, Joseph Eckert, Christ Buerkle Sr., Pat Blake, Friedrich Ruschmeyer, Reinhold Glaeser, John Berger, and Fred Lehrke.

The following is a list of the early settlers, of which there are some children or grandchildren still living in the township. Christ F. Buerkle, Christ Buerkle Jr., F. W. Biermann, John Bentz, Reinhold Glaeser, Fred V. Burdorf, Cornard Eckert, Wm. Wittenberg, F. A. Schroeder, Martin Jaus Sr., John Berger, John Ruschmeyer, Christ Thiem, August Thiem, Wm. Vorwerk, Konrath Walter, Fred Uetzmann Sr., Henry Luehring, Fredrich Lehrke, Ernest Jannicke, Heinrich Kahle, Christian Drews, and Henry Michaelis.

### CHURCH

On the 20th of May, 1878, Reverend Henry Albrecht preached the first sermon, at the residence of Christ Buerkle Sr., there being an attendance of twenty persons. Services were continued quite regularly at Mr. Buerkle's residence until 1879, when the St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation was organized with thirteen families joining. A church edifice was erected at a cost of \$600.00, and placed under the charge of Reverend Henry Albrecht. In 1881 it had a membership of 24 persons with Reverend John Grabarkerwitz in charge. At the time the church was erected an adjoining lot was laid out as a cemetery. In 1889 another cemetery was laid out on a hill, as more satisfactory for burials.

The first congregational records that could be located showed the first child born to Mr. and Mrs. Dunnemann on September 9th, 1879, was baptized February 15, 1880, and named Ida Bertha Dunnemann.

On January 4, 1883, the first marriage performed was that of Christ Buerkle Jr. to Miss Ottilie Witt, and the couple are still living in near-by Gibbon.

On May 28th, 1882, the first class was confirmed by Reverend John Grabarkerwitz and included the following: John G. Buerkle, Wilhelm Christ Dahlke, George Buerkle, John Henry Ruschmeyer, Gerhardt Henry Atrops, Emilie Augusta Thiem, and Amelia Paulina Siebert.

In 1890 a new church, 36 x 60 feet, was erected with a 90 foot steeple, at a cost of \$4,200.00 which was considered a very fine building in those years.

In about 1903 the congregation purchased a new pipe organ for \$1,200.00 which is still giving satisfactory service. In 1924 at a cost of \$2,400.00 the church was raised and a full basement made. In 1929 a new balcony and new pews were put in the church for \$2,700.00. In 1940 electric lights and an oil burner were installed for \$1,200.00. In 1947 at a cost of \$4,200.00 the church was completely redecorated including new art glass windows which give the church a new appearance.

At the present time there are 85 voting members, 290 communicant members, and 416 baptized members in the congregation. No record can be found of the first officers of the congregation. The present officers are Arthur Glaeser, Chairman; Walter Weller, John W. Bode, and Wm. F. Panning, Elders; Wm. O. Kiecker, D. A. Schwecke, and John W. Meyer, Trustees; Albert Gruenhagen, Willie Templin, and Henry Thran, School Board; Martin Raedeke, Teacher and Secretary, and Elton Vorwerk, Treasurer. Reverend O. W. Rohde is the present minister. Ninety-five percent of the people in the township belong to some church, however, the majority are members of St. Peter's Lutheran congregation in the township.

### **PAROCHIAL SCHOOL**

The Parochial school of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran church started in about 1882. The children were taught by the ministers at the church building until 1894, when the first one room school was erected. The first regular teacher was Herman Schoeer. In 1903 the second school was built, in order that two teachers could be obtained, one for the four lower grades, and one for the four upper grades.

In 1949 a contract was let for a new fireproof building with two class rooms, full basement with auditorium, and other conveniences could be erected. The school is to be completed by September 1st, 1949, at a cost of about \$40,000.

At the present time there are 63 students, with Mr. Martin Raedeke the regular teacher for the four upper grades, and Miss Lois Gullerud the teacher for the four lower grades.

In 1894 a large house was built for the minister, and in 1898 one was built for the regular teacher.

### **DISTRICT SCHOOLS**

On December 5th, 1878, the first school district was organized, District No. 24, and it seems that it included the entire township. The first school board that served was Wm. Hoefer, Chairman; Louis Neukirch, Clerk; and Christ Buerkle, Treasurer.

The first school was held at the residence of Andrew Seabrandt, in Section 9, in the fall of 1879, and the teacher was Barbara Schaffer. In the fall of 1881, the teacher was F. A. Schroeder. School was held in the church building with sixty-five students.

As population increased the Southwest quarter started their own district number 60 in 1882. A school house was built on a tract of land purchased from Fred Hoppenstedt. The first officers were Fred Hoppenstedt, Clerk; Herman Bulau, Chairman; and John Berger, Treasurer. The first teacher at this school was John Dieter.

In 1917 the first school was replaced by a new and modern building.

In 1883 the Northwest quarter of the township established another district, number 62. The first officers elected in this district were: Wm. Wittenberg Sr., Chairman; George J. Beck, Clerk; and John Ruschmeyer, Treasurer. Miss Harriet Wilson was the first teacher. This building was replaced with a new one

in 1910.

In 1888 District No. 24 was split, and a new district No. 75 was started in the Northeast quarter of the Township. The first officers elected for the district were: John Schultz, Chairman; Reinhold Glaeser, Clerk, and Fred V. Burdorf, Treasurer. The first teacher was Blanche Canfield.

There are, at the present time, a total of 141 children of school age in the township, of which 63 attend St. Peter's Lutheran Parochial School. The remainder attend the Gibbon Parochial school, or the public school in Gibbon. All district schools in the township are closed at the present time. This is due mostly to the fact that so many children attend the parochial schools, and also because of the teacher shortage.

Transportation by bus and tuition for children from the township who attend the Gibbon Public School is paid for by the districts.

### **FARMING**

In the early days of the township grain was chiefly grown, with the principal crop being wheat. However, shortly thereafter diversified farming was found to be more practical, such as, dairy, hogs, beef cattle, and poultry. Oxen were the first power, and horses came at about the same time. These were the only power on the farms.

In 1878 the first wire binder was used for harvesting grain, and it was owned by Pat Blake. These were soon replaced by twine binders.

In 1879 the first horsepower threshing machine was owned and operated by John Atrops, Christ Buerkle Sr., and Frederick Ruschmeyer, and took twelve horses to operate.

In 1885 the first steam engine threshing machine was purchased and operated by Fred Uetzmann, Wm. Schoenfelder, Gotlieb Miller, Fred Hoppendstedt Sr., and Fredrich Ruschmeyer.

In about 1912 the gasoline tractor power farming started. At the present time about 90% of the farm work is done with tractors, and some farmers do not have any horses at all.

Rather than use pitch forks at threshing time, most farmers now cut the grain with a swatter, thresh the grain with a combine, and bale the straw out in the field with a pickup baler.

Field cutters are used quite extensively for silo filling, and hay choppers also are being introduced.

The worst depression that can be remembered was in 1932, when the farmers lost all their buying power. This also brought the depression to the businessmen. With deflation of farm prices, the following list shows how low prices dropped. These are the prices in December, 1932. No. 1 wheat 30c, Barley 16c, Flax 92c, No. 2 corn, shelled 10c, oats 7c, rye 16c, eggs 10c dozen, butterfat 19c, hens under 4 lbs. 4c, hides per lb. 1c, and Turkey's 8c.

At South St. Paul Market hogs sold for \$2.90 per 100 pounds, sows \$2.00, and a 1200 lb. cow brought about \$30.00.

In 1933 the Soil Conservation Program (A.A.A.) was born out of great depression, as a twin with the program to get farming back on its feet financially, "which it did." Soil conservation does help farms prosper. It equally helps the whole country prosper.

Information furnished by: Marvin Sievert, Reinhold Varneck and William Uetzmann.

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## ***City of Henderson***

Henderson was the first town of Sibley county to be incorporated. Articles of incorporation are dated February 21 or June 3, 1885. The city of Henderson is situated on the Minnesota River about 58 miles from St. Paul and Minneapolis. On the main line of the Omaha R. R. and State Highway No. 19. Henderson was named by Major Joseph R. Brown in honor of a relative, Andrew Henderson of Frederick, Pa.

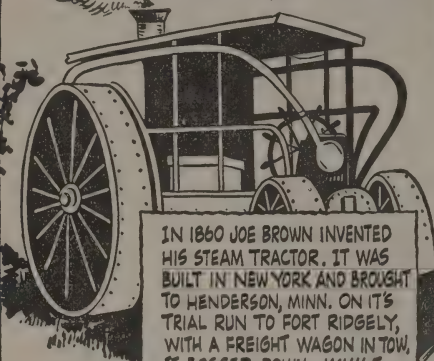
The man credited with taking the first steps towards the foundation of Henderson and Sibley county was Major R. Brown. Joseph Brown came to Ft. Snelling with Col. Leavenworth in 1819 as a drummer boy. He was

# MAKERS OF MINNESOTA

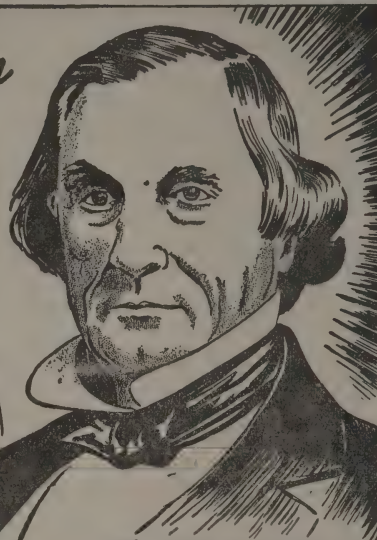
Sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society

## Joseph R. Brown


SOLDIER, FUR TRADER, LUMBERMAN,  
TOWNSITE-PROMOTER, INDIAN AGENT,  
POLITICIAN, EDITOR, AND INVENTOR.



IN 1860 JOE BROWN INVENTED HIS STEAM TRACTOR. IT WAS BUILT IN NEW YORK AND BROUGHT TO HENDERSON, MINN. ON ITS TRIAL RUN TO FORT RIDGELY, WITH A FREIGHT WAGON IN TOW, IT BOGGED DOWN. WHILE ANOTHER WAS BEING BUILT IN 1870 JOE BROWN DIED.

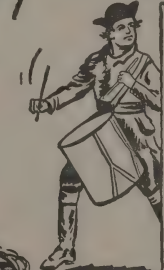


HE WAS 14-YRS. OLD WHEN HE CAME AS A DRUMMER BOY TO FORT SNELLING WITH COL. LEAVENWORTH'S TROOPS IN 1819 — 42 YRS. LATER HE ROLLED THE DRUMS AT THE FAMOUS HANGING OF THE 38 INDIANS AT MANKATO.



IN 1838 HE STAKED A CLAIM AND LATER BUILT A CABIN ON THE ST. CROIX. WHEN ST. CROIX COUNTY, WISC. WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1840, JOE BROWN'S CLAIM "DAKOTAH," BECAME THE COUNTY SEAT. IT IS NOW PART OF STILLWATER!

1849 Minnesota Territorial Centennial 1949



*Brown County*  
IS NAMED IN HIS HONOR.

*KERO*

then 14 years old, leaving his home in Pennsylvania to seek his fortune in the northwest. Brown became a fur trader, an explorer and an Indian agent.

In passing up and down the river for several years previous to the settlement of the place, Brown had observed a high point of land on the river bank about a mile below the present site of Henderson. He was determined to found a town there. But on his arrival in 1852 for that purpose, he found three French-Canadian already in possession. They were Hyacinth Camirand (Cameron), Numidgne La Bissniere and Esdras Beliveau. They landed May 12, 1852 and set up a carpenter shop. On arrival they staked their claim there, because during the spring floods, it was the only point in the vicinity that was not submerged.

Major Brown had with him three partners by the name of Spencer. They attempted to purchase the claim of the owners, offering them four



Minnesota River in Flood Stage near Henderson

hundred dollars. This offer the owners refused and demanded five hundred dollars. This amount Brown would not give and he located his town on the present site.

The first boat-load of lumber reached the new town in 1853, consigned to Joseph R. Brown. It was used in the construction of the Valley House. The Valley House, which was started by Brown in 1853 was completed in 1854 by Benjamin Lesker, and opened as a hotel; the first in the town. This building stood on Main street until razed in 1939.

Major Brown also built a frame house opposite the site of the Valley House. This house has been removed to the corner of Main & Sixth and was used as The Independent printing office.

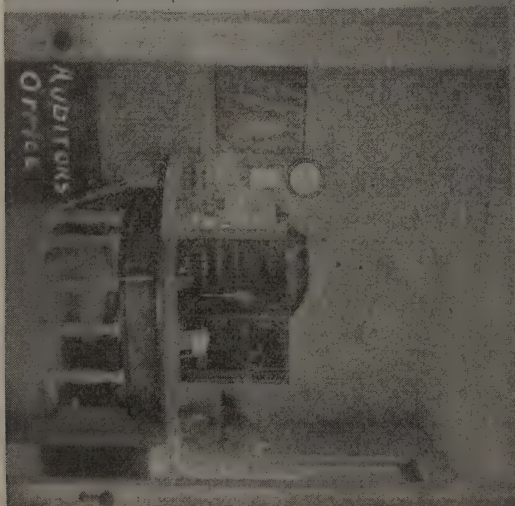
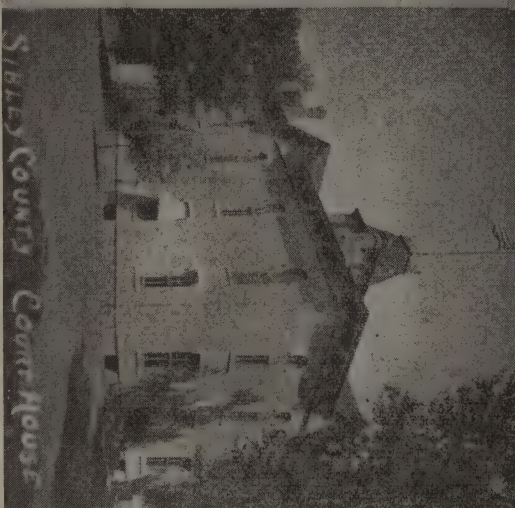
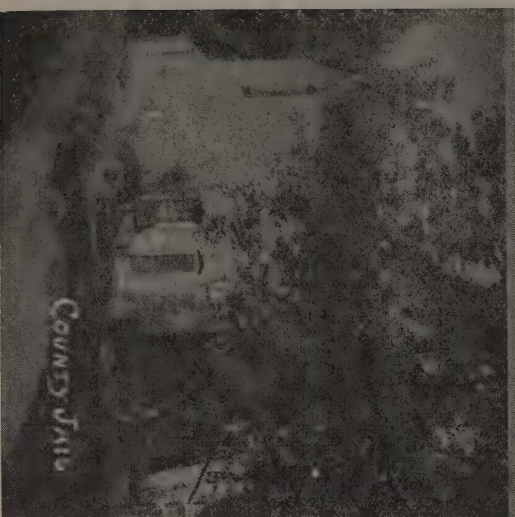
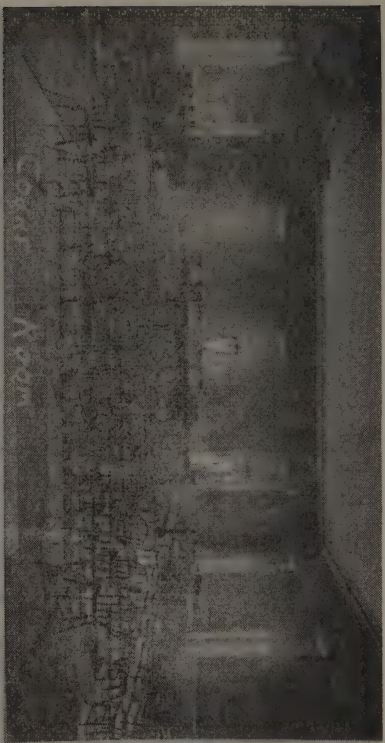
Henry Poehler visited the place in 1853, but did not settle here until 1854. In 1853, Charles Blair came to Henderson in the employ of Major Brown. The same year C. H. Drew came and engaged in surveying, also Thomas Welch and John Clark. Clark took a claim near town and was the first sheriff of the county. J. M. Ayer also came in 1853 and the next year was engaged in running the ferry.

During the spring of 1854 the place settled quite rapidly. Among those arriving at that time were E. J. Ayer, L. S. Reynolds, and George Peasler. Henry Poehler came in the summer of 1854. He was employed by Joseph Brown as a clerk until 1855. Poehler then started business with his brother Fred, under the firm name of H. Poehler & Brother.

The first houses erected were two small log cabins built by Brown on his first arrival in 1852. They were located on the bank of the river. They stood until 1857, when they were destroyed. In the spring of 1854 Brown



Minnesota River in Flood Stage near Henderson



Old Court House —Now Community Building in Henderson

brought his family to Henderson. His wife and eight children came up on the steamer "Montello."

In those early years Henderson was particularly unfortunate in her mills, five burning within a short time. The first steam saw-mill was built in 1854 by Ludwig Klatte on Mill street. That mill was destroyed by fire in 1858. Another saw-mill was built by Mr. Yale on Market street. This was burned in 1857. Essler and Rief also built a planing and shingle mill in 1858. It burned in 1861.

The first flour mill was built by Joseph R. Brown in 1859. Five years later it burned. In 1868 Fred Schimmel erected a steam flour mill. This mill was erected at a cost of \$14,000. It ran one year and shared the fate of all the others.

Joseph R. Brown surveyed and platted the town in April, 1855. It originally contained 320 acres. Camirands Addition in the north increased the size 160 acres. Still another addition of 120 acres by Mr. Brown.

The first white child born in the village was Joseph Henderson Brown, son of Fletcher and Maria Brown, at the home of Joseph R. Brown, in the fall of 1854. The first marriage took place in the old Valley House, in June, 1855, being that of Daniel Working and Miss Olivia Gunderson.

Newspapers—In 1856, Jos. R. Brown established the Henderson Democrat with J. C. Stoeve as publisher. The first number appeared April 3, 1856. The Democrat was discontinued about 1860. In 1862, F. Belfoy started the Henderson Monitor, and published it until 1869. Henderson was without a newspaper from 1869 to 1872, when the Henderson Times was established by Wm. R. Colton. In April, 1873, The Independent was started by Daniel Picket; and has continued publication under the editorship of Gus. Buck, Mrs. C. Stelter, D. Van Quackenbush and the present editor, Oscar Trolldahl.

Churches—In 1858 a Methodist religious service was held in the old school house. The first sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Zollman of St. Paul. The first resident pastor was Rev. John Schnell.

The Catholics organized in 1859. The Rev. Father Somercisen, of Mankato celebrated Mass in the house of Gebhard Durrenberger. A church was erected in 1862. A brick school and concert hall was erected in 1874. The church and concert hall were destroyed by fire in the fall of 1886. The present frame church was erected in 1887, under the direction of Father W. B. Jansen.

The Episcopalians held their first service in the summer of 1858. It was conducted by Rev. M. Jones of St. Peter. St. Jude's Church was built in 1872 and consecrated July 1, 1873, by Bishop Whipple.

St. Paul's Evangelical & Reformed Church, Rev. A. O. Mann, Pastor, The St. Paul's congregation was organized in 1868, by the ministration of Rev. C. Fachmann. The first church building and parsonage were erected in 1868. The present church edifice was erected in 1905, and the present parsonage in 1915. Pastors who served the congregation are the Rec. C. Fachmann, 1868; Rev. Hunzicker from New Rome, 1877; Rev. J. Engelbach, 1878; Rev. T. Polster, 1879; Rev. R. Conrad, Rev. J. Zwicker, Rev. Hanson, 1880-1882; Rev. J. Bodmer, 1882; Rev. J. Klopsteg, 1888; Rev. G. Syrich, 1906; Rev. M. Lehmann, 1911; Rev. A. O. Mann, 1935—.

The Methodists organized in 1866 with seven families. A small church was built in 1867. In 1875 a larger structure was erected. The congregation disbanded and this building was removed in 1908.

The Centennial Lutheran church was organized in 1939 under the pastorate of Rev. John Busch. It was so called because established during the Lutheran Centennial year. This parish now has a frame church in the

city of Henderson. The first services were held in the church December 5, 1948. In several years being a mission congregation, services were held in the Henderson Community building. There are 20 voting members.

School—The first school of which there is any authentic account was taught by J. J. Peck in a log house at Henderson, in the winter of 1854-55. The attendance ranged from six to seven pupils.

The present school was built in 1900. An addition was erected in 1935 with additional classroom, a spacious auditorium and gymnasium. The present enrollment is 285.

In 1893 Henderson adopted their charter and articles of incorporation as a city of the fourth class. The population of the city in 1948 was 960. The present officers of the city are: Mayor, Ray J. Molitor; Councilmen, William Schrupp, Elmer Tolf, Emil C. Teschendorf, Chris J. Blaha; Clerk, Chas. F. Whiford; Treasurer, Helda M. Tiegs.

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## *City of Arlington*

The Village of Arlington was laid out in Section 9 of Arlington Township in 1856. It occupied the south half of Section 9 in Arlington Township. This little hamlet served the adjoining area as its trading center and stopping place for many years.

Palmer and Hawkins had a store operated in partnership. Mr. Palmer sold to Christ Klinket, who in turn sold to Theodore Streissguth. John McKeeber and J. S. Perry operated a store for two years but failed. Haupt and Wolfe operated a store until 1878. In 1878, Haupt and Kill operated the store. Mr. Kill bought out Mr. Wolfe.

In 1858, Mr. Mathias Bertrang opened a blacksmithshop. One of the Bertrang sons also had a blacksmith shop in east Arlington, and another in west Arlington.

Arlington postoffice opened in 1857, with J. S. Perry as postmaster. Alfred Slough's was the first death in 1858. He was buried on a site of Arlington.

With the coming of the railroad in 1881, "town" fever struck the citizens in this village. An elevator was built as well as other buildings.

The village of Arlington was incorporated in 1883 upon petition of 31 petitioners. It had an area of 68½ acres of land, and a population of 175. In 1884, a poll tax of two days was laid on each legal voter in the village limits.

Among interesting ordinances passed by the village council in 1884 were: one prohibiting the building of barns on Main street; establishing a fire department; prohibiting false fire alarms. In 1884, six street lamps were erected. In 1899, a reward of two hundred dollars was posted to be paid for evidence leading to the arrest of anyone guilty of arson.

In 1890, Arlington completed its new city hall (now in 1949, the fire hall), at a cost of \$3114.00. In 1890 the city purchased an electric plant "for the purpose of lighting the city." On February 4, 1896, at a meeting of the village council, a motion was made "to appropriate \$2000 for the purpose of paying bills the village of Arlington incurred in the recent county seat contest."

On April 21, 1896, the council appropriated another \$1000 for the purpose of defraying expenses incurred in the county seat removal contest by the village of Arlington. On April 15, 1947, Arlington held a special election for incorporation as a city of the 4th class. The Home Rule Charter was adopted by a majority of the voters at a special election on November 2, 1948. In 1940, Arlington had a population of 1122. The 1940 census is expected to show a larger population.

With the changing times, Arlington has kept pace. Business flourishes. The city is a reflection of the prosperous surrounding farming community. Arlington, it is said, is named after Arlington, Virginia.

### **Arlington Public School**

The first school on the site of Arlington was opened in a log structure late in the fall of 1857, about two years after the first group of settlers came into the area. William Beatty was the first teacher. Other than the above, there are no records available to show who the teachers were in succeeding years, or where the school was located. However, after the railroad came through Arlington in 1881, a frame building was erected on a site of the present school, but the name of the teacher is not available. In 1889, it is recorded that P. A. Cosgrove was superintendent of the school and Mrs. Mary Minkiewitz was the teacher. This frame building was enlarged at various times in later years and served as an institution of learning in Arlington until 1935, when the present modern structure was erected.

### **St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Arlington**

The first services were held in the west Arlington School District No. 14. In 1871 a log church was built at the west end of Arlington. This was organized in 1872. It was then also decided to use the lots west of the church for the cemetery. The first church site was what is now the east side of the cemetery. The first minister was Rev. J. Rupprecht. The present building was erected in 1886, and later enlarged in 1903. A parochial school was also established for the children of the congregation. This school stood until 1948, when a new building was erected, which accommodated more children and had modern facilities.

### **St. Mary's Catholic Church of Arlington**

A Catholic congregation was established in 1864. A little log church was built by families of the surrounding community, namely the Hilgers, Math Travis, John Kill and John and Math Bertrang and a few others. The parish was a missionary served by visiting priests from 1864 to 1893. The little log church was built on the hill about one mile north of Arlington in 1864. In 1882, a brick church was erected a few yards away. In 1894 this church was taken down, brick by brick, moved to the village and rebuilt, exactly as it had stood on the hill. The Catholic cemetery remained on the hill just across the road to the east from where the first original church had stood. For eight years a Mr. Wattery taught school in the little log church. In 1894, Father Rosen became a resident priest serving both the Arlington and Gaylord congregation. The same church is now used for services.

First Baptism: Elizabeth Weckop, April 25, 1882. First Marriage: Louis Kill and Anna Ollig, May 9, 1882. First Death: Caspar Francis Kluth, age 2 months, May 19, 1883. The foregoing are the first happenings on record. In 1910, the present parish house was erected by Rev. Francis Rant.

### **The Methodist Church 1358382**

Zion Methodist church of Arlington is the outgrowth of several pioneer churches in the surrounding territory, which at one time formed a circuit of German Methodist Episcopal churches, served by one minister. In 1855, a pioneer Methodist missionary, John Schnell, came from St. Paul and preached in and around Le Sueur, Shakopee, Jordan and Henderson. In 1856, Gottlieb Siebrass was sent to preach on the circuit. He organized the first church in Sec. 32, Jessenland Township. Under John Schnell as pastor, the first church, a log building, was erected in 1860. His successor, Heinrich Singastrue, built the first parsonage, also a log building in 1864. This still stands on the Joyce Sohn farm.

In 1892, a church was organized in the village of Arlington. The Ar-

lington church was built under pastorate of C. T. Jahn, and in 1899, a modern parsonage was built under the leadership of August Biebighaeuser. The pastor could then live in Arlington and serve the Green Isle, Ebenzer and Arlington congregations from that city, a more central location. These churches were members of the Northern Conference of the German Methodist Episcopal churches until 1924, when they became a part of the English-speaking Minnesota Conference of the Methodist Episcopal churches in 1939. Floyd A. Kufus is the pastor at the present time.

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## *Village of New Auburn*

A townsite was laid out on the present cemetery location in 1856, and called High Island. Later another village was started and called New Auburn, so named from Auburn, N. Y. because some of the settlers came from that city. The first store was built in 1857, by J. U. Green and Edward Wright. This log building later became the Williams Hotel, where the first township meeting was held in May 1858.

New Auburn was incorporated on the 6th of June 1895. The first village officers were: W. W. Bigelow, president; B. F. Stocking, trustee; W. G. Vaughan, trustee; J. T. Richardson, trustee; M. A. Campbell, treasurer; N. A. Ranney, recorder; John Soper, justice; Henry Thwing, justice; Wesley Applin, constable.

The first mill was built by Samuel Scantleburg and Sons in 1856. The first postoffice was established in 1857. It was an unlocked box on a pole. The postmaster was Thomas Scantleburg. He whittled the first cancelling stamp with a jack knife. At the time it was considered quite a work of art. The mail was brought here by anyone coming from Henderson. It was put in the box for the people in the neighborhood. The postmaster, from his mill in the distance, could keep his eye on the postoffice.

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## *City of Winthrop*

While Winthrop really had its genesis in the sporadic settlements of the 50's and 60's, its identity may be traced back to the establishment of the Eagle City Post Office. Which, according to government records, was in existence as early as 1858, and was located one half mile south of Winthrop.

Michael Cummings was the first postmaster. He also conducted a tavern beside the old Fort Ridgely road, about a quarter of a mile from the grove known as Cummings Grove, later being known as Thorson's Grove, the tavern operating until 1862, when it was burned.

Little is known of the period during the Civil War.

In 1867 and 1868 a small group of Swedish immigrants settled in the vicinity of the Eagle City Post Office, among them being Mr. and Mrs. Erick Olson, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Swanson, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Swan Kulander and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Anderson. These families became the first permanent settlers in the immediate vicinity which is now the city of Winthrop. The Erick Olsons homesteaded the land on which the city is located. These pioneers had their share of hardships. Here they set about to establish their home, a sod-covered dugout with a rudely constructed stockade for the cattle.

The closest trading point was New Ulm. They made the trip in a crude wooden axle wagon drawn by a span of oxen, their butter and eggs were exchanged for the few groceries they had to have. Home made candles provided light for the long winter evenings during which time the hum of the spinning wheel was heard in nearly every home. Mail was received about once a week and a newspaper was not a very common thing.

After a few years others settled nearby and slowly a promising settlement was developed.

In 1880 a crew of surveyors were surveying for a railroad. This was welcome news to the pioneers, whose closest trading centers were New Ulm and St. Peter.

The pioneers in order to help make the railroad a reality, canvassed the community circulating a petition that was forwarded to the M. & St. L. R. R., offering contributions from \$5.00 to \$50.00 as a bonus to the railway company for the building of the railroad. The petition read as follows:



CHARLES A. SWANSON  
Second Postmaster Eagle City

"We the undersigned hereby agree to pay the sum or sums set opposite our names to the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad for the purpose of securing and assisting them to pay for the right of way of a railroad through the Town of Transit. And also to assist them to build a depot in said Township of Transit not over two miles from the north line of the Township of Alfsborg in said county and state and said depot be built and road equipped and running to Minneapolis on or before December 31st, A. D., 1881 ... .. C. J. Larson, Gustaf Larson, Pat Bray, Andrew Swanson, And. O. Bengston, Johan Anderson, A. M. Bergren, John Turnquist, Oke Anderson, J. Setterman, John Halberg, Charles A. Swanson, Charles Anderson, Erick Olson, Swan Swanson, Frederick Setterman, August Johnson, John Engelbert, Peter Brunn, C. W. Anderson, Swan Holberg, A. Peterson."

In the spring of 1881 the surveying for the railroad was completed and construction began. In the fall of 1881 the rails were laid to Winthrop and the first passenger train arrived on Christmas Eve. The building of the railroad attracted many interested in the new town. The first settler on the original Winthrop townsite was Erick Olson. The townsite was surveyed and laid out in the fall of 1881.

Several buildings were erected during November and December of that year. The first business place was built by Chas. Webster for E. John Anderson. The first residence was built by A. P. Johnson of Cornish townsite for Nels Johnson. The dwelling was located where the Parkview Hotel now stands, this building now serving as a residence on the Ben Ayer farm in Alfsborg township.

Among the first business enterprises launched during the forepart of 1882 were: Swan Gustafson, a store; Louis Ueber, a hotel; John Toll, a shoe shop; E. Rueprecht, a blacksmith shop; A. Richert, a saloon; Emil Miller, a wheat buyer; Quist Bros., a hardware store; Louis Anderson, a lumber yard; N. P. Nelson, a store; Aug. Kempf, Meat Market; Chilstrom and Malmquist, a store; Nels Johnson, a lumber yard; J. P. Billing, a wagon shop; John Anderson, a saloon; J. A. Carlson, a saloon; Herbert Kimball, a meat market; John Berquist, a blacksmith shop; B. Steiner, a hotel; C. E. Webster, a carpenter and E. A. Campbell, Insurance and Postmaster.

E. A. Campbell, who was associated with W. D. Washburn of the M. & St. L. R. R. in the promotion of the line through here, was the man who gave Winthrop it's name in honor of John Winthrop, the celebrated gover-

nor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The village was incorporated in 1884, the organization being held Dec. 16, 1884. E. Miller was the first mayor and C. L. Dresbach the first recorder. The city hall was built in 1889 and opened with elaborate ceremonies. The late Gov. John Lind, then a Congressman, delivered the dedicatory address.

Winthrop became incorporated as a city Jan. 10, 1907. At the first city election John A. Larson: was elected mayor. The aldermen were Swan Gustafson, Henry Streseman, C. E. Larson and Wm. E. Korth. Frank J. Schisler was City Clerk, L. J. Larson, treasurer and A. T. Johnson, Justice of the Peace.

### Churches

The congregation that became the First Lutheran Church of Winthrop came into existence a short time after Winthrop was founded. The congregation was organized Feb. 2, 1884. The Rev. C. M. Rydeen, of Bernadotte, served as chairman of the organization meeting and P. P. Quist as secretary.

Rev. Rydeen was called to serve as pastor in connection with his work at Bernadotte. He accepted the call and became the first pastor. The present pastor is the Rev. Lambert Engwall.

The Union Congregational Church was organized Feb. 24, 1889 by the Rev. R. P. Herrick. Charles A. Benson was the first secretary. The Rev. Carl Weiler was the first pastor and the Rev. Irving Campbell is the present pastor.

The Mission Covenant Church was organized March 22, 1891 by the Rev. E. Aug. Skosberg, L. S. Spoon serving as chairman and Charles A. Swanson, secretary. The Rev. Albert A. Tornell became the first pastor. The Rev. Paul E. Stohlberg is now serving as pastor.

The Zion Lutheran Church was founded in 1897 by the Rev. J. Naumann of Gibbon. The Rev. H. C. Ritz became the first resident pastor, assuming the pastorate in 1899. The present pastor is the Rev. C. W. A. Kuehner.

The Methodist church was organized June 22, 1896, under the direction of the Rev. John Anderson, pastor of the Cornish Methodist church, Rev. Anderson serving this congregation in connection with the Cornish church. The Rev. Roy Campbell is the present pastor.

Friedens Lutheran Church was chartered Feb. 13, 1911 by the Rev. W. Von Fischer. The Rev. Hugo Vandraw was the first resident pastor, taking charge in 1920. The present pastor is the Rev. A. Schira.

The Church of Christian Apostles was organized in 1928 under the direction of the Rev. M. W. Miller, who is still pastor.

St. Francis Catholic church was organized by Father Clemens in September, 1942. The first organization meeting was held at the Louis Nessen home. A basement church was built in 1947 and Father Leo Krzmanck read the first Mass Christmas morning, 1947. Father Harold W. Hesse is now in charge of the parish.

### Winthrop Public School

The first school house in the Winthrop vicinity was located in Transit Township on the site of the farm buildings on the Lewis Anderson farm.

In 1883 a petition was circulated to set aside Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 17 and 18 of Alfsborg township; Sections 25, 26, 35 and 36 Bismarck Township and Section 31 of Transit Township for the formation of District 63. P. P. Quist was the first signer on said petition. The petition was granted May 23, 1883.

The first school meeting was held Sept. 1, 1883. Serving on the first board were E. A. Campbell as chairman, Geo. W. Lilly as secretary, and P. P. Quist as treasurer. A two room school house was built in 1884. This

is the building now known as the Methodist church. At first but one room, the downstairs room, was finished and the first teacher was a Miss Peterson, from Red Wing, Minnesota.

In 1887 the upstairs room was finished and another teacher added. As the village grew and the population increased it was evident that a new and larger building was necessary. On July 13, 1895, \$7,000 bonds was voted for a new school building. The new building, the middle unit of the present building was completed late the same fall, dedication exercises being held Dec. 20, 1895, with Wm. H. Eustis, mayor of Minneapolis, as the principal speaker. The building was a four-department structure with J. F. Koehler as the first superintendent. The members of the board of education were E. A. Campbell, president; N. A. Lillyquist, secretary; C. F. Berquist, Aug. L. Anderson, T. Thorson, and J. H. Hausman, directors.

Following the erection of the new school building it has been necessary to add more space. In 1901 the east wing was built and in 1911 a west wing was added. In 1936 another addition was built. Today the school occupies thirty rooms and employs eighteen teachers. The combined enrollment for grades and high school is 390. The school has four special departments: Agriculture, Commercial, Industrial Arts and Home Economics. In addition a full time Music Teacher is employed for both grade and high school.

Today the Winthrop Public School is thoroughly modern in its equipment and curriculum. Much credit for the school's marked advance during the past 25 years can be given Mr. P. M. Paquette, who was superintendent for a period of 23 years, retiring in 1947. The present superintendent is Mr. A. L. Nelson.

### **Industries**

The dairy industry dates back to the pioneer days, shortly after Winthrop came into existence a creamery known as the Gustafson and Olson creamery, was built. This building was located across the street from the present creamery on the site of the Mrs. Emily Edlund residence. This creamery was operated by horse power, one horse attached to a sweep furnishing the entire power.

In 1883 a group of farmers and business men formed a Stockholder's Creamery Association and a plant was built where the Tri-County Cooperative Oil Association has its bulk plant. The venture did not prove a success and the creamery was sold to W. H. Patten & Company.

The matter of a cooperative creamery was discussed for some time, and in January, 1896, the Winthrop Cooperative Creamery Association was formed. Nels Johnson was the first president. The old creamery owned by W. H. Patten & Company was purchased for \$1,000. In the first cream checks issued, 9 cents a pound was paid for butter.

In 1900 the plant was rebuilt and by 1905 the receipts had been trebled. The increase in the volume of butter manufactured increased year after year. Finally it became evident that more room was needed, and a decision to erect a new building was made. Plans were drawn and contracts let and June 1, 1928, work on the plant was started, being completed and ready for opening Oct. 20, 1928. The plant is one of the most modern in the state. The entire atmosphere of the place is suggestive of the highest standards of sanitation, efficiency and business-like operation. Mr. Wilard Meyer is the present operator.

### **Canning Company**

The Winthrop Canning Company, devoted to the canning of corn and peas, came into existence back in 1903. The factory was organized as a stock company by local business people of Winthrop. C. A. Benson was president and C. A. Schilling secretary.

The company continued in operation until 1930, when it was purchased by the Minnesota Valley Canning Company. This company is today the largest exclusive producer of canned corn and peas in the entire world. Mr. Halvor Hagg is superintendent of the local plant.

### **Tri-County Dairy Cooperative**

The Tri-County Dairy Cooperative, dry milk plant located at Winthrop, is one of a group of fine modern milk plants associated with the North Star Dairy Cooperative, a large central marketing institution.

The plant was incorporated April 12, 1944 as Tri-County Dairy Cooperative including Sibley, Nicollet and Renville counties. The original board of directors were: Leo N. Schaefer, Nicollet, president; Geo. L. Quist, Lafayette, vice-president; C. M. Lind, Winthrop; Geo. H. Vetter, New Ulm, secretary; C. R. Olsen, New Sweden; Wm. H. Muffelman, Gaylord, and Wm. Leach, Bird Island.

The plant was erected at the cost of approximately \$325,000. Of this amount \$78,000 was expended on the building proper and \$222,000 in equipment. It is a model of its kind. Several products aside from dried milk are produced. About 35 men and women are employed. Mr. Frank C. Waskow is the manager.

Seven cooperative creameries sponsoring the organization were: Bird Island Cooperative Creamery, Gaylord Cooperative Farmers' Creamery Ass'n., Klossner Creamery Company, Lafayette Farmers' Cooperative Creamery Ass'n., New Sweden Creamery Ass'n., Nicollet Creamery Ass'n., Winthrop Cooperative Creamery Ass'n. Later the following additional creameries have become associated with the plant: Bernadotte Cooperative Creamery Ass'n., Courtland Creamery Ass'n., Essig Cooperative Dairy Ass'n., Evan Cooperative Creamery Ass'n., Gibbon Cooperative Creamery Company, Model Dairy of Mankato, New Auburn Creamery Ass'n., New Ulm Milk Processing Plant, H. M. Noack & Sons of Arlington, Norseland Creamery Company, North Star Cooperative Dairy Ass'n., Rush River Cooperative Dairy Ass'n., St. Peter Creamery Company, Star Creamery of Henderson, Willow Lawn Creamery Ass'n. of St. Peter.

Winthrop is today one of the busiest trading centers in Southern Minnesota. Its business people are up-to-date, progressive and accommodating. The stores and other business houses are modern in their operation and in their line of wares are thoroughly equipped to meet demands of the most particular. The city is noted for its beautiful homes.

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## ***Village of Green Isle***

The name Green Isle is another version of the "Emerald Isle." Some of the early inhabitants of the village were Owen McGrann, John McGrann, Hugh Brown, Thomas Dolan, Mike Sweeney, John Kiernan, Jared Spellacy, Mike McMahon, Dennis Downs, Patrick McCormack, William Neavin, Dennis Neavin, Martin Neavin, Edward Shaughnessy, Daniel Meyers, Martin Lee.

The village was incorporated in November, 1883, and the first mayor was Hugh D. Brown.

The first birth in the village was James O'Meara, son of John and Ellen O'Meara.

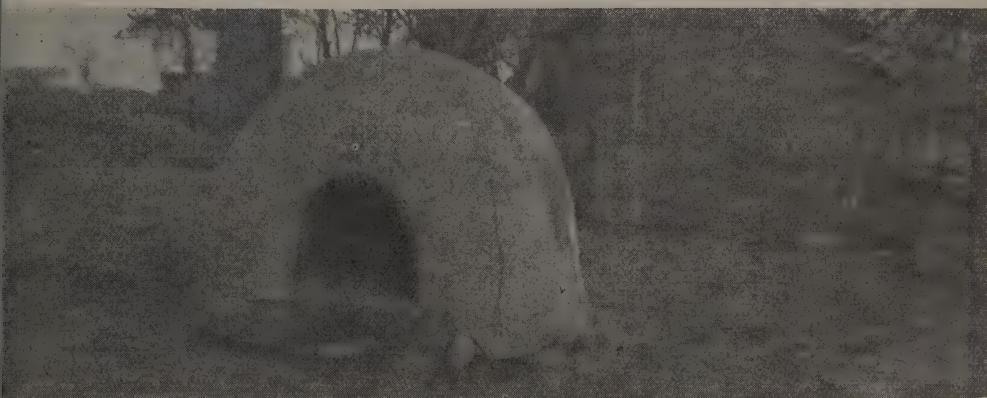
The Green Isle Volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1888 with Dennis Neavin as first Chief.

The Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway was built through here in 1881. Brown & Finnegan opened the first general store on the west side of the railway tracks. Later they built the brick store, now operated by Nevin

Bros. During the period between 1885 and 1905 there were four grain elevators and one flour mill in Green Isle.

The first school teacher here was Jennie Martin. Classes were held in the John Kiernan house, and later in the building now occupied by the post office. In about 1885 a new four room frame building was erected on the east end of McGrann street. This building served the district until the present brick structure was built in 1936. High school students are transported by bus to Glencoe and Arlington. Father McManue was the first priest to say Mass here. Services were held in the homes of Thomas McMahon and Patrick O'Meara. A frame building was built about 1865, just north of the present church. Father Venn of Henderson, Father McDermott of Assumption and Father Nealis of Jessenland were other priests to serve until 1881, when Father Timothy Ryan was appointed first Parish Priest. The corner stone of the present brick church, St. Brendan's, was laid in 1882. Father Ryan was succeeded by Father John J. Hand, who remained for twenty-five years. Father James E. Doyle was pastor from 1909 to 1917, Father John Byrne from 1917 to 1923 and the present pastor, Father Andrew J. Doyle was appointed in 1923. The congregation consists of about one hundred families. Nealis Tracy is secretary and Fred P. Michaletz is treasurer. Mrs. Virginia Corcoran is president of the Ladies Auxiliary, and Mrs. Mary Tracy, secretary.

The Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul's congregation was organized February 13, 1925, and incorporated March 19, 1925. The corner stone of the church was laid in September, 1925. Basement dedication December 6,



Outdoor Bake Oven used by Early German Settlers in Green Isle Township on Schwartz Farm

1925. Rev. H. J. Boumann was first temporary pastor, and he was assisted by Student, R. W. Rottmann. The pastors were: Rev. W. H. Boumann, Rev. R. W. Rottmann, Rev. Bert Streufert, Rev. L. T. Wohlfeil, temporary, and Rev. R. Arndt, the present pastor. The teachers of the parochial school were: R. C. Rehmer, 1931, Edmund Janetzke 1932, M. F. Noennig 1933, H. Gersmehl 1937, Herman Daenzer 1938, Edgar Spletzer 1942, Robert Wudy 1943, Norbert Meyer 1944, and Edgar Priess 1945. At present there are 189 communicant members, 275 souls, 32 voting members. Organizations: Ladies Aid, Mens Club, Young Peoples Society. Present Elders, F. C. Hebeisen, August Schaefer and Emil ZumBerge.

The Citizens State Bank was organized August 2, 1902. M. J. Molitor was the first cashier. The bank was first located in the building now occupied by the Green Isle Record. The present officers of the Citizens State Bank are: James F. Mullen, Pres.; F. P. Michaletz, Vice-Pres.; James B.

Mullen, Cashier and Muriel Oelfke, Ass't. Cashier. The deposits on December 31, 1948 were \$2,119,170.43.

The Green Isle Record was established on July 21, 1905, as a business mens' Co-Operative paper. The first editor was John Billie, of Minneapolis. He stayed only three weeks. Frank H. Groetsch of Gaylord, Minn., then edited and published the paper for the Co-Operation until 1908, when he purchased the paper and has since published it.

The present village officers are: F. P. Michaletz, mayor; R. A. Kreger, clerk; F. H. Groetsch, treasurer; Thos. Bean, H. W. Harjes and August Schaefer, trustees. Bert H. Roth is assessor and J. W. Wherley, marshal. The population of Green Isle is 375.

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## *Village of Gaylord*

The village of Gaylord was named for a railroad man. The inhabitants first thought of calling the village Maassville, after August Maass Sr., who owned much of the land where the western part of the city now stands. It was decided that Maassville was too long, so the name of Gaylord was substituted.

The village was settled mostly by German farmers, who came to Dryden township to either buy land or take up claims, but when the railroad was imminent, many came to begin business ventures, buying land of the farmers already on the scene. So we have the Maass, Spellman, Poehler, and Mannsfeldt additions to the Village of Gaylord. The first two buildings erected on the site of Gaylord was a store built by Henry Boettcher and a harness shop by Louis Rothmund. Several other buildings were in the course of construction—W. G. Connick was building the first bank and Zahnke a building to be used as the first town hall.

The railroad came in 1882 and Gaylord became a thriving village.

Having the 25 legal voters required by law to incorporate as a village, a notice was duly drawn up and signed by Julius Henke and Herman Thoele, announcing an election to be held June 28, 1883, for the purpose of electing a village council, including a president, three trustees, a recorder and treasurer, also two justices of the peace and a constable. An affidavit appended showed that Mr. Henke had duly posted the required election notice. This was subscribed before J. L. Robinson, notary public.

The election was held at Seegar's Hall on the appointed date, the polls opening at 10:00 a. m. Julius Henke was elected president of the council, a position corresponding to mayor in the larger municipalities; Chas. Bonne, William Dretschko and C. H. Spellman won the race for berths as trustees; Patrick Tierney was elected recorder, W. J. Connick, treasurer; Henry Boettcher and Horace Soper, justices, and George Meyers, constable. Chas. Bonne served as clerk of the election; Henry A. Boettcher was elected moderator, and A. R. Steinke and Louis Rothmund served as judges.

The first meeting of the village council was held at the Bank of Gaylord, June 29, 1883. The officers were qualified at this meeting and the necessary bonds were fixed. The amounts were: for recorder \$100; for treasurer \$1,000; for constable \$250, and for justices \$500. The next day, June 30, J. L. Robinson was appointed village attorney for the period ending Jan. 1, 1884, with a salary of \$25 for that period. This would approximate the sum of \$50 a year.

The first ordinance passed was one regulating activities of peddlers. After Gaylord was incorporated it was found that according to Minnesota law the election was not legal, so in 1885 the legislature passed a bill legalizing all villages incorporated at the same period as Gaylord.

There was a controversy between the township of Dryden and Village of Gaylord as to whether the assessor of Dryden township had the authority to assess in the Village of Gaylord. This was a test case tried before the state Supreme Court, known as the State of Minnesota vs. Spaude. This was in 1887 and it was so held that the assessor could assess in the township of Dryden and Village of Gaylord. The attorneys in the case were Moses Clapp (later U. S. Senator), Mackenzie, Oblinger, Kipp and Preble on one side, and W. H. Leeman and Ora J. Parker on the other.

The first church in Gaylord was the German Evangelical, established in 1881. Seventy families were connected with it, the pastor being the Rev. Charles Kruchmeir. A school was also established and a cemetery of four acres near Lake Titloe. This church is now the Immanuel Lutheran church. Later, another Lutheran church known as St. Paul's, with Lorenzo Ziegler as pastor, was built. A cemetery was plotted south of town. Later a part of the same was sold to the Village of Gaylord for a city cemetery.

A few years later Gaylord had St. Michael's Catholic church and the First Congregational church, with H. B. Beard as pastor.

The first public school building was built in Henke's addition to the village of Gaylord and consisted of two rooms. Some of the first teachers were Jim Sharpe, J. Oblinger, Frank Jennings and Augusta Spellman. This building is still standing and has been used as a dwelling house for many years. Soon a larger building was necessary and a brick building in Maass' Addition was built. F. A. Morrill was the first superintendent in the new building. Later the building burned down and was replaced by a new brick building much larger. Land adjoining the school was known as the Court House block, the people being sure of some time securing the county seat and a new court house.

The city of Gaylord now has a completely equipped modern school building with a staff of 15 teachers, a great credit to the hustlers of Gaylord, who worked to secure this magnificent building.

Gaylord, situated in the center of Sibley county, was very anxious to secure the county seat. Henderson was away off in one corner of the county, hard for people in the western part of the county to journey to, especially in bad weather. Gaylord was the logical place for the county seat, so Gaylord in 1890-1895-1902 tried to secure the county seat, and was unsuccessful. In 1915, a petition was drawn up as follows:

PETITION—To the County Board of the County of Sibley, Minnesota.  
The undersigned legal voters of said county pray that the county seat thereof be changed to the Village of Gaylord, in said county of Sibley, and State of Minnesota. NOTICE—To Whom It May Concern: Public notice is hereby given by the undersigned legal voters of Sibley County, Minnesota, that the above petition will be circulated beginning not later than July 26, 1915, in the County of Sibley, Minnesota, for signatures of the legal voters of said county for a change of the county seat of said county, to the Village of Gaylord, Sibley County, Minnesota. Dated: June 30, 1915. Signed: S. J. Maurer, Chas. Busch, E. J. Mueller, Aug. Maass Jr., H. G. Wanke, Chas. Wallin, Thor Peterson. Gaylord County Seat Executive Committee.  
The fight was on!

Gaylord won the county seat. The vote cast was the largest ever recorded in Sibley county, a total of 3712 expressing their opinion on the question—2200 voting "Yes" favoring removal, and 1512 were opposed—the majority in favor being 688, leaving 158 over the 55 per cent of votes cast in order to win the election for removal.

Henderson immediately filed two notices of contest. The first notice of contest was tried before Judge Morrison at Shakopee, C. H. Mackenzie appearing for Gaylord, W. H. Leeman and Cadwell for Henderson. The action was dismissed on account of defective notice. The second notice of contest was tried before Judge Morrison in his chambers at Norwood. Judge Cadwell of Le Sueur argued the case for Henderson and County Attorney A. L. Young and C. H. Mackenzie for Gaylord. Senator Moonan of Waseca and W. H. Leeman of Henderson were also present as counsel for the contestant. The judge decided in favor of Gaylord—so now at last Gaylord had acquired the county seat in the year 1915.

A fine new court house was built, that with its beautiful school building, its lovely homes, fine churches; its city natural park on the shores of lovely Lake Titloe, its athletic field with its neon lights, the game protective league park on the east side of the lake, its modern stores, modern fire equipment, paved streets, electric lights, waterworks, and phone service, the village of Gaylord with its lamp posts, town pump, and board walks of 1883 has come a long way to the present city of Gaylord.

—Information by Ethel Mackenzie Wescott.

## *City of Gibbon*

(By Charles Anderson)

(The following account of the history of Gibbons was told by the late Charles Anderson, one of the pioneer settlers of the community.)

The first white person who actually lived on the land where Gibbon is now located was Mr. August Peterson, the grandfather of Reuben Bullemer. Mr. Peterson came to this land in 1878. However, the land just South of Gibbon, and partly where the South part of Gibbon is now located was taken up as a homestead before that time by a Swedish family named Sundell but the Sundell family had built a house and had lived a few rods South of their own land because there had been no accurate survey made at the time that they took up the land, and it happened that they located their living quarters several rods away from their own land for that reason. Their house was built on the hill very near where the Swedish Lutheran cemetery is located, a little bit Southeast of the cemetery.

August Peterson had settled in Section 6 of Lafayette Township, Nicollet County, more than 10 years before this, or in 1867, on an 80 acre homestead. He could not obtain more homestead land because he was within the "Railroad Limits," which was land that had been granted by the United States Government to any railroad that would build a line through the country, the railroad obtaining title to every other section for ten miles on each side of the track, the proceeds from the sale of which would finance the building and equipment of the road. The Minnesota legislature had granted a charter to the St. Peter and Winona Railroad to build a line from Winona to Marshall, this charter being granted in 1867, the year in which Peterson obtained his land. Soon after that Mr. Peterson bought another 40, so that he owned three forties.

In those days all of the early settlers went out to work on the railroads which were being built. They did this in order to earn money with which to build their homes and to buy horses and tools or lumber. There was no farm income whatever to begin with. Mr. Peterson lived on his homestead while he worked for the railroad for the next five years. Then he obtained a deed with clear title to his land. All this time he lived in a dug-out, or cellar, like everyone else did at the time, until he would have enough money with which to buy lumber.

In 1874 Mr. Peterson mortgaged his land to the Corbin Banking Company of New York in order to obtain enough money so that he could build a little

house above the ground. The lumber which he bought with this money was mostly hauled from St. Peter, and a little of it was bought in New Ulm. The Corbin Company was lending a great deal of money to the early settlers in Minnesota in those days, and they charged a high rate of interest, at least one percent per month.

In 1870, sometime during the spring, my father and I noticed a camp-fire to the North-west of our farm one evening, and we thought that it was someone that was camping out for the night. But the next night we saw the light in the same place, so the following day my father and I set out to investigate and to find out where the light had come from and what it meant. When we came over there we found a settler's shanty, and as we approached, a lady came to meet us. It was Mrs. Sundell. She told us that her husband had been a ship-builder in Sweden, and that he was now building bridges for the St. Peter and Winona Railroad in the vicinity of Swan Lake. She said that her husband had taken that homestead, and their cow was staked out near by. They had two little children, a few chickens, very little to live on, no neighbors, and they were very lonely. No one living within range of their eyes! Not a shanty in sight! She said that it was too lonesome an existence for her, and she did not think that she could stand it, so she did not intend to stay there very long. Well, they stayed there until November and then they moved to Section 36, Severance Township, (the old Berlin place,) in order to be near the Clear Lake settlement and neighbors. There they squatted for some years, but did not look after title or homestead rights, and it happened to be a school-section which had not been placed on the market for sale. They did not pay anything for it, and did not seek title or deed, and they did not do anything to get the matter straightened out and proved up, so they had to move when the time came for getting matters straightened out.

Soon afterwards, August Peterson found out that Sundells land on what is now the site of Gibbon had never been claimed since Sundells had moved away. After he had investigated the matter, he decided to let the mortgage on his land in Lafayette Township of Nicollet County be foreclosed, so that he lost his homestead as well as the forty acres which he had bought. Then he applied for the land which is now the South half of Gibbon, South of the railroad tracks. He obtained this land under the TREE ACT, in 1878, this being Sundell's eighty. In the fall of 1878 he moved his household effects from Lafayette Township to his new land, and started planting the grove of trees which would give him right of possession. He did very little farming, but he and his sons worked on the railroad with their teams in order to earn money. They worked for the first two seasons in this way.

A petition to incorporate the town of Gibbon into a village was drawn up by thirty residents of the town and presented to the Board of County Commissioners of Sibley County on August 26, 1887. At that time the population was officially listed at 213 persons. This petition was presented to the Board for the purpose of setting a date at which an election would be held to let the voters decide whether or not they wanted to incorporate as a village. At that time the land was plotted into lots and blocks, with all necessary streets and alleys laid out.

This special election to incorporate the town into a village was held October 25, 1887, with thirty-five votes being cast. All votes were recorded as being in favor of the incorporation.

The first rules and regulations governing the newly formed village were officially adopted and approved by a village council on February 9th, 1891. At that time F. J. Glasbrenner was president of the council, and C. A. Peterson was village recorder. At the same meeting the governing body also adopted the first six ordinances on the village record books.

Gibbon has advanced steadily through the years since it was incorporated and today boasts of one of the best built and compactest villages in the area.

Several of our pioneer business establishments are still operating having been handed down through the years.

The firm of Johnson and Johnson (Ole N. Johnson and Charles Johnson) one of the first auto repair businesses in the territory, are today operating under two separate establishments. One of these is the large garage and automobile business of C. J. Johnson & Sons, and the other is the firm of O. N. Johnson Co., who handle hardware and farm implements and also operate a large grain elevator.

Gibbon can boast of the only town in Sibley County having two banks. The first of these to be organized was the State Bank which was organized January 1, 1904. The Citizens State Bank was organized September, 1906. Through the years these two institutions have advanced steadily and today their combined deposits are over \$3,000,000, which is more than any other town in Sibley County has on deposit.

Other pioneer businesses still operating are the Gibbon Creamery, the Hauser Lumber Company, Bullemers Store, and Isaksons Tin Shop.

At the time of incorporation as village Gibbon had two churches, the Immanuel Lutheran church which was organized in 1885 with Rev. J. Frey as the pastor, and the St. Willibrord's Catholic Church, was organized in 1886 with Father Jensen serving as priest. The other church, the Augustana Lutheran, was organized in 1899, with Rev. Ryden as pastor. The Gibbon newspaper was started in 1894 with the first issue coming off the press April 6. A. C. Buck was publisher and E. F. Koehring was editor.

Throughout the years Gibbon has advanced as a business and trading center serving this area with all its needs. New homes have been erected each year, business buildings have been rebuilt and kept in good repair. Founders of the village would be amazed and pleased if they were able to see the town they started.

In 1881 the M. & St. L. R. R. surveyed from Hopkins through this territory, and asked for a bonus of 15% of the assessed valuation of Cornish Township if they were to pass through the Township and locate a depot there. This proposition was voted down by the Town Meeting of 1881. In the spring of 1881 the Railroad Company made another proposition to the Township, that if the company were given a right-of-way through the Township, the railroad would give the Township a depot in Section 6, which is now a part of the Emil Peterson farm. The Township agreed to this proposition, on the condition that the railroad would build the line thru there by a certain time. The Railroad failed to fulfill that condition, with the result that the proposition was void, and the deal fell through entirely.

Now August Peterson found out that the deal was off, so he went to Minneapolis to the office of the Railroad company and made them a proposition as follows: If they would build a depot on his land, he would give the railroad the title to the forty acres which embrace the site of the old part of town, in Section Two. The Railroad Company accepted that offer, and gave Mr. Peterson the privilege of choosing one lot which he would own for himself, in this part of the town-site which would be laid out. The lot Mr. Peterson chose was the one where Oswald's Meat Market now stands. The rest of the lots, after they had been platted, were placed on the market for sale by Mr. E. A. Cambell of Winthrop, and the Town of Gibbon had been started off on its career.

The name, Gibbon, was chosen by Mr. Cambell in honor of his commanding officer under whom he had served in the Civil War, and became the official name of the village after being registered with the government.

Mr. Peterson then bought the 160 acres which now constitutes the North part of Gibbon, from the Chicago and Milwaukee Railroad as soon as it was placed on the market. This land had been entered as swamp land, which it

certainly was. A price of \$3.00 per acre was paid for it at that time, which was plenty to pay for swamp, but the greater part of it is now the City of Gibbon. Mr. Peterson sold three forties of it to Henry Knipple in 1886. The other forty he gave to the railroad.

As a matter of fact, the Sundell family never lived on their homestead land or proved up on it in any way. They built their shanty in which they lived fully 100 yards from their land, on the hill straight West of where the Oswald slaughter house formerly stood. Sundells never did have any rights or equity in this land. It is true that they had been near it, and had intended to settle on it, but no proper survey had yet been made in this territory, and no markers had been placed for Sections and Quarters. They had no sure way of knowing whether they were on their own land or someone else's. They thought that they were on their own homestead, of course, but they were actually at least 80 rods South of it.

All that is left of the Peterson Tree Claim now, that is, any trees of the original planting, is the grove of tall cottonwoods where the Gibbon Boy Scouts have their cabin. It is a little South-west of Depot. At the time that the trees were planted, where the mainstreet of Gibbon now is located there was a good planting of trees in the tree-claim. Mr. Peterson had seven years in which to plant the trees and cultivate them before he could prove up on his land. When those seven years were up he had done a good job, and he had his deed and title clear, and then he laid out the town in lots on his land.

Mr. Peterson's second daughter, Hilda, married a man by the name of August Bullemer, who later owned a store in Gibbon. This daughter, Hilda became the mother of Reuben Bullemer. Mr. Peterson's oldest son, Charles, was the first post-master of Gibbon.

The first white settler anywhere near Gibbon was really Mr. Swan Lindstrom, who bought the Clear Lake farm, which consisted of 200 acres on the shores of Clear Lake. He bought that farm from a New York firm of speculators in 1867. He had lived at Judson before that, running a ferry across the river there. While he had lived at Judson he had heard about Clear Lake, and came up to investigate. When he saw the timber around Clear Lake he bought it as soon as the deal could be made and settled there. A little later he brought along his friends, Mr. John D. Jacobson and Mr. Guldbran, the father of Andrew Guldbranson. Andrew was a boy of 15 years at that time, but was large and strong for his age, so that he did a man's work. He worked on the railroad, earning a man's wages, and he made quite a bit of money which he saved carefully and invested wisely. He was always very careful with money. His father, on the other hand, was very poor, and the son let his father have the money as he earned it. Then the son made his father give him the 80 acre homestead with the buildings which had been erected with his earnings, and then he bought more land. His father and mother then moved up to Murray County, where they died. Andrew Guldbranson had a brother who homesteaded the 80 where the Melquist family lived, but his brother was careless with his money and did not look after his homestead rights, so a German farmer jumped the claim and took it away from him.

My father came up here to this township when I was nine years old, arriving here on August 14th, 1869. He had first come to St. Paul in 1868 from Milwaukee where he had lived for a short time. When my father arrived in St. Paul, the railroad had just been extended that far West, and there was only a small depot like the one we have in Gibbon now, and there was only one side-track, even less than Gibbon has!

## MINNESOTA.

BUFFALO LAKE



# GREEN ISLE TOWNSHIP

Green Isle Township was named after the Emerald Isle by a native of Ireland, Christopher Dolan.

The first permanent settlers arrived as early as 1855. Some of them were: 1855, Charles Brooks; 1856, Gottfried Bullert and wife; Frederick Mielke and David Schauer; 1857, John Peters and wife, Katherine, with daughters, Anna age 16, and Katherine age 11; Thomas Shartell, Mathias Bert-rang; Peter Esser, Peter Kane, John McGrann, Michael David, Henry Voss, Patrick O'Meara, Pat Dwyer, Bernard Gray, and Pat Carrol; 1858, John Voss and wife, Marie, son Henry age 20, and daughter, Anna age 16; Henry Lange and Carl Voight; 1861 Heinrich Dammann and Mathew Waldron.

This Township was organized May 11, 1858 at the home of Patrick O'Meara. The first officers were: Chairman, Christopher Dolan; Supervisor, Bernard McGowan; Clerk, John McGrann.

Some of the early homesteaders were: 1857, John Peters, Section 2; Charles G. Schmid, Section 33; Patrick O'Meara, Section 24; 1861, Ludwig Huesfeldt, Section 2.

First marriages were: Charles Brooks to Caroline Monke, 1862; John Bullert to Wilhelmine Moskop, August 27, 1866.

First births: Those of John Abraham, and Augusta Tuchtenhagen, baptized by Rev. Rupprecht on November 24, 1861.

The first death was that of Anna Voss, daughter of John Voss, in 1859.

The first school was taught by John McGrann in private homes at a wage of \$10.00 per month, plus board for a three-month term.

At present, 1949, there are five school districts in Green Isle Township: Districts Number 30, 31, 32, 33, and 45 with a total of 72 attending public elementary schools. School District No. 33 is closed.

The only church in Green Isle Township is the Zion Lutheran church located in Section 26, erected in 1874, Rev. F. H. Kolbe then Pastor. The cemetery is on the church yard. In early times church services and prayer services were held in private homes conducted by Rev. Rupprecht, and Rev. Sprengeler from Hamburg. This is one of our county's energetic congregations having 70 voting members, 204 communicant members, and 271 souls. The congregation maintains a parochial school with 21 pupils in attendance.

At the time of organization, 1858, the population was 66. At present, 1949, the population is about 950.

The township has heavy black soil. It is a complete township having within its borders three lakes, namely: Severance, Farwell and Schauers. There are at present—1949—162 farms.

Some of the descendants of original pioneers now living in the township are: William Lange, Sr., son of Henry Lange, settler of 1858; Carl Voight, grandson of Carl Voight, settler of 1858; Tom Waldron, grandson of Mathew Waldron, resides on the Waldron homestead; Mrs. Arthur Graupman, daughter of Henry Dammann, settler of 1861. Mrs. Graupman is the granddaughter of John Peters, settler of 1857; Mrs. Carl Ortloff, great-granddaughter of John Peters; Mr. and Mrs. Carl Ortloff now reside on the original John Peters estate.

General Remarks: Christopher Dolan was appointed postmaster about 1866 in Section 13, Green Isle Township. Peter Esser Jr. was drowned May 3, 1868 at the age of 14 years, in Lake Severance. The dwelling of Henry Voss in Section 1 was used as a trading store in the early years. This building is still being used as a dwelling by the Roland Farber family on the same place. On August 19, 1862 Heinrich Lange, an early settler in the year 1858, fell into the hands of the Indians. He was working for a contractor in the vicinity of Yellow Medicine. On his way home he was attacked by hostile Indians who robbed him of his pony, rifle, money and most of his clothing and dragged him up to the neighborhood of New Ulm. He made his escape by swimming the nearby stream.

(Information by: Arthur Sprengeler, Herman Schwartz, Anthony Jochum.)













